

A. L. Rowse: <i>Homosexuals in History</i> .. .. .	584
Patrick F. Sheeran: <i>The Novels of Liam O'Flaherty</i> .. .. .	593
Richard Shone: <i>Bloomsbury Portraits</i> .. .. .	597
G. de G. Sievking, I. H. Longworth and K. E. Wilson (Editors): <i>Problems in Economic and Social Archaeology</i> .. .. .	59
Alexis Sayer: <i>The Puntropean: A History of Food and Its Preparation in Ancient Times</i> .. .. .	58
Katherine S. Van Eerde: <i>John Ogilby and the Taste of His Times</i> .. .. .	57
Ray Wallis: <i>The Road to Total Freedom: A Sociological Analysis of Scientology</i> .. .. .	53
W. J. Weatherby: <i>Squaring Off: Maitre v Baldwin</i> .. .. .	58
<b>FICTION</b>	
Macdonald Harris: <i>The Balloonist</i> .. .. .	58
Erich Segal: <i>Oliver's Story</i> .. .. .	58
Tom Sharpe: <i>The Great Pursuit</i> .. .. .	58
John Sommerfeld: <i>The Imprinted</i> .. .. .	58
Francis Stuart: <i>A Hole in the Head</i> .. .. .	58
Colin Watson: <i>One Minute, Almost</i> .. .. .	58

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# The motions of the mind

By Anthony Hecht

RICHARD WILBUR:

The Mind-Reader

New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$6.95.

Let me try to list some of the virtues that distinguish the poetry of Richard Wilbur. First of all, a superb ear (unequalled, I think, in the work of any poet now writing in English) for stately measure, cadences of a slow, processional grandeur, and rich, ceremonial orchestration. A philosophic bent and a religious temper, which are by no means the same thing, but which here consort comfortably together. Wit, polish, a formal elegance that is never haughty or condescending, though certain free-wheeling poems take it for a chilling frigidity. And an unforgotten gusto, a naturally happy and grateful response to the physical beauty of life, of women, of works of art, landscapes, weather, and the perceiving, constructing mind that tries to know them. But in a way I think most characteristic of all, his is the most kinetic poetry I know: verbs are among his conspicuously important tools, and his poetry is everywhere a vision of action, of motion and performance.

That this is no mere casual habit but instead deliberate policy can be shown, I think, by the fact that pivotal and energetic verbs so often are placed in a rhyming position, and by that slight but potent must-have device call some attention to themselves.

We could believe, if you told us, that the white-tailed dove will slip into perfect shade, grown perfectly shy, The lark avoid the reaches of our eye, The jack-pine lose its knuckled grip On the cold ledge, and every torrent As Xanthus once, . . .

"Advice to a Prophet"

Or brewed in gulleys, steeped in wells, they spend In chilly steam their last warm days, From shallow hells, a revenance of field. And orchard air. . .

"In the Elegy Season"

For all they cannot share, All that the world cannot in fact afford, Their forty promises are flooded With the massed voices of continual prayer. "Altitudes"

Sweet whiter brings a cookie and braids down. Past spattered mosses, breaks On the tipped edge of a second shell, no fill, no full, no rim, no rim, The massive third below, it spills In threads then from the scalloped rim, and makes A scrim or summery tent. . .

"A Baroque Wall-Fountain in the Villa Sciarra"

—remembering how the bed Of layered rock two miles above my head

Rove up and broke Soundless esunder, when the shink-ing skin Of Earth, blacked out by steam and smoke, Gave passage to the muddled fire within, Its crannies flooding with a sweat of quartz, And lathered magnus out of deep retorts

Welled up, as here, to fill With tumbled rockfall, stone-fume, lithic spray, The dike's brief chasm and the sill. Weathered until the sixth and human day, By sanding winds and scuffed and brayed, By the slow glacier's heel, these forms were made "On the Marginal Way"

There may be those viewing the whole enterprise of formal poetry

with suspicion or derision, who may suppose that this richness of inflections, this abundance of verbs, has been forced upon the poet by the ruthless exigencies of stanzic form: the necessity, one way or another, of digging up a rhyme. For those to whom formal poetry is in itself unnatural, an embarrassed or twisted parlance of one who is self-consciously ill-at-ease holding the floor, any unusual feature of poetry, even its most towering grace, can be thought of as no more than the by-products, the industrial waste, entailed by meter and rhyme; and therefore (in the name of directness, of authenticity, of courage, of any number of Rousseauian virtues that belong exclusively to the noble savage) to be deplored as a victimization, as no grace at all but a crippled response to life and language. This sort of argument is marvellously self-serving and based utterly on ignorance. In any case, there are far too many poets who employ strict formal devices (e.g. Housman, Auden, Graves, Ransom) and in whose work verb-forms play an almost unnoticed part, to make it plausible to explain this distinctive quality of Wilbur's as no more than an inadvertence over which he has neither choice nor control.

The truth is, if anything, just the opposite. Wilbur has been from the first a poet with a gymnastic delight in the fluency and control, in the vitality and importance of stamina and focused energy. We are not to be surprised that the poet who can praise

the dining-car waiter's absurd Acrobacy—tipping a tray like a wind-busting bird, Plumblines his swaying torso, the sole thing sure In the shaken train. . . should also take it into his head to celebrate the skills of a juggler, the leap of Nijinsky, a Degas dancer, the slauous and angelic floatings of laundry on a line, the acemper and swift of blown newspaper, the convening in the air "like a drunken fingertip" of a flock of birds, even, in the realm of the purely mechanical, a fire-truck "blurring to sheer verb". Or that he should write poems called "Running" and "Walking to Sleep".

This delight in nimbleness, this lively sense of coordinated and practiced skill is, first of all, a clear extension of the dexterity the verse itself performs. If it were no more than this it might be suspected for an exercise in that self-approval which, like one of the poet's fountain-patters, "its own applause". But it is more. For again and again in Wilbur's poems this admirable grace or strength of body is a sign of or symbol for the inward motions of the mind or condition of the soul. Most obviously in "Mind", the very executive operations of the mind correspond to the speed, the passage, the radar intelligence of a bat. But think also of how the two contrasted fountains (in the Baroque Fountain poem) represent two alternative postures of the spirit, one of relaxed and worldly grace, and the other of strenuous, earth-denying effort. Think, too, of these opening lines:

As a queen sits down, knowing that a chair will be there, Or a general raises his hand and is given the field-glasses, Step off assuredly into the blank of your mind. . .

Something will come to you. . . This poem's recurrent subject is not only the motion of change and transition but how that motion ("In the Elegy Season", "Marginalia", "On the Marginal Way", "A World Without Objects", "A Sensible Emptiness", "Years-end", "Merlin Enthralled", and "Digging for China" are only random examples) is the very motion of the mind itself.

It is, I think, remarkable that this double fluency, of style and of subject, should be so singularly Wilbur's own, and that his poetry should exhibit so often the most important and best aspects of cinematic film: the observation of things in motion from a viewpoint that can, if it cares to, move with an equal and astonishing grace. But what these poems can do so magnificently is that it is probably beyond the range of motion pictures in specifically transition, or, rather, translation, of outward physical action (the heave of a weight, the bounce of a ball, the sprint of a runner) into a condition of the imagination; a dissolving of one realm of reality into another, for which the poet's "Merlin Enthralled" might serve as an example. As perhaps these stanzas might also:

A cavalier from off his saddle-bow, That bore a lady from a leaguer's town; And then, I know not how, All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and did creep Roll'd on each other rounded, smooth'd and brought

Into the welts of sleep. As it happens, these stanzas are by Tennyson, and I suggest that they supply a far more likely source for some of Wilbur's techniques than the purely mechanical, a fire-truck "blurring to sheer verb". Or that he should write poems called "Running" and "Walking to Sleep".

This delight in nimbleness, this lively sense of coordinated and practiced skill is, first of all, a clear extension of the dexterity the verse itself performs. If it were no more than this it might be suspected for an exercise in that self-approval which, like one of the poet's fountain-patters, "its own applause". But it is more. For again and again in Wilbur's poems this admirable grace or strength of body is a sign of or symbol for the inward motions of the mind or condition of the soul. Most obviously in "Mind", the very executive operations of the mind correspond to the speed, the passage, the radar intelligence of a bat. But think also of how the two contrasted fountains (in the Baroque Fountain poem) represent two alternative postures of the spirit, one of relaxed and worldly grace, and the other of strenuous, earth-denying effort. Think, too, of these opening lines:

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first word of the third line, which can be read as referring either to "saddle-bow" or "cavalier". But then, after the colled springs of those three lines, there follow five of soft intoxicated swoon. But they are more than that. As opposed to the compressed action, alarms and dangers of the first three lines, the swoon here involves a process of glacial patience and geological refinement, a vast secular effort of withdrawal, leaving in its wake a moraine of verbs, like a scatter of polished boulders come to rest. It would be easy to believe that these lines and those of "On the Marginal Way" came out of the same imagination.

Publishers are not always judicious about their dust-jacket claims, but Wilbur's American publishers have been wise to quote the following from Theodore Roethke's posthumously published notebooks: "Wilbur: can look at a thing, and talk about it beautifully, can turn down in his mind, and draw truths from a scene, easily and effortlessly (it would seem)—though this kind of writing requires the hardest kind of discipline, it must be remembered. Not a graceful mind—that's a mistake—but a mind of grace, an altogether different and higher thing."

That mind of grace is brilliantly at work in *The Mind-Reader*, Wilbur's latest book, and nowhere more than in the title poem, a dramatic monologue of immense poignancy and mastery, which opens with these lines:

Some things are truly lost. Think of a sun-hat Laid for a moment on a parapet. While three young women—two, perhaps, in mourning—One, Talk in the crenellate shade. A slight wind plucks And budes it; it scuffs in the edge and cartwheels Into a giant view of some description: Haggard escarpments, if you like, plunge down Through mica shimmer to a moss Amidst which, here or there, a half-

seen river Lobs up a blink of light. "The sun-hat falls. With what free flirts and scoops you can imagine, Down through that reeling vista or Unseen by any, even by you or me. It is as when a pipe-wrench, caputulated From the jounced back of a pick-up truck, dives headlong Into a bushy culvert; or a book Whose reader is asleep, garbling Glides from beneath a stouner chair and yields Its flurried pages to the princelings sea.

This deserves to be savoured carefully, and at length. There is the superb visualization of motion, of diminution into irretrievable distances; but for all the specificity of imagery, the event is all conjectural, hypothetical, the work and motion of the mind itself. The sun-hat is merely proposed as a subject for thought, everything it moves through is contingent ("a giant view of some description"; "Haggard

escarpments, if you like, . . .") as is its own motion ("With what free flirts and scoops you can imagine . . ."). And so, initially, this flowing, limpid descent becomes a metaphor for the imagination, the graceful motions of the mind. In this sense, it is part of that important vein of modern poetry, of which Wallace Stevens is one of the great practitioners, a poetry about poetry. But this is only the beginning. The grace, the smoothness, the very "grace" described in these lines is a grace, a humanity, of the speaker, an old Italian "dipsa" who cades drinks, at a calet that is all but his "office", from transient patrons in exchange for his mind-reading act. And he manages with infinitely graceful tact to remind us how merciful is that Greek myth which tells us that the dead drink of the waters of Lethe, and are immediately blessed with forgetfulness. For indeed, who could be even in life, to be afflicted with total and perfect recall of all his own failures, his acts of clumsiness and unkindness, his foolish errors and stupidities? Yet it is apparent that this old man has been singled out for this especial torment. Given the exquisite, interminable anguish of his life it is not surprising he should seek oblivion in drink, but it is absolutely astonishing that he is able to do so. Yet it is, in fact, the grace of his mind, his chance patrons, with such affecting civility, such perfect "grace". It is, we recognize quickly, close to that tortured insomnia which speaks to himself in Wilbur's earlier poem, "Walking to Sleep".

Splendid as this poem is, it represents only one aspect of a remarkable versatility. A reviewer can scarcely hope to do justice to all the skills and graces here exhibited, so I must resort, weakly, to a sort of list. Few other poets could register so faithfully both the slumber, vulgar vitality of a Villon ballade and the fastidious, well-bred wit of La Fontaine and Voltaire. And there are the poet's utterly superb, colloquial translations from the modern Russian of Brodsky, Voznesensky and Nikolai Morshev. There is a little group of truly lovely poems of which one in particular, "The Prisoner of Zenda", is a masterpiece. In the editorial attention of Kingsley Amis who is, I understand, at work on an Oxford Book of Light Verse. And there is, finally (though first in the volume), a group of twenty-two very brief poems, some of them as brilliant as anything Wilbur has done. "The Fourth of July", for example, bids fair to be the best thing to come out of the American Bicentennial. But in this poetic era of arrogant solipsism and limp new-ageism, when great chunks of poetry write only about themselves, or about the casual workings of their rather tedious minds—it is essential to our sanity, salutary to our humility, and a minimal obedience to the truth to acknowledge with Wilbur, in poem after poem, but here especially in one called "The Eye", the vast alterity, the "otherness" of the world, that huge corrective to our self-sufficiency. The poem is about the pleasures, the danger, the temptations, merely of "looking", and it ends with a prayer addressed to St. Lucy that concludes:

Forbid my vision To take itself for a curious and Nominal me that I am here in body A passenger, and rumpled.

Charge me to see In all bodies the beat of spirit, Not merely the tout en l'air Or double pike with layout

But in the strong Shouldering gain of the legless man, The calm walk of the blind young woman Whose cane touches the curbstones.

Correct my view That the far mountain is much diminished, That the fovea is prime composer, That the lid's closure frees me.

Let me be touched By the alien hands of love forever, That this eye not be folly's loop-hole But giver of due regard.

*The Mind-Reader* is shortly to be published in England by Faber and Faber.

# The still centre of the art world

By Quentin Bell

WENDY BARON: Miss Ethel Sands and her Circle 300pp. Peter Owen, £8.50.

Ethel Sands knew everyone. That convenient hyperbole may be allowed, if by "everyone" we mean a great number of people who in England in her time painted or wrote, or took a lively interest in the arts of writing and painting. For about three quarters of a century these were the things that most interested her and she was, eminently, in the thick of them. Henry James was there to applaud her debut, Sickert was the friend and mentor of her maturity, her declining years were made comfortable by the attentions of Cyril Connolly. Her parents came from New England and belonged to that generous class which brought untold wealth and bold, virtuous beauties to the European marriage market; indeed her mother was among the most beautiful of all the beauties and gravitated naturally towards Marlborough House. In *Miss Ethel Sands and her Circle* Wendy Baron describes that intensely interesting meeting between two cultures with considerable delicacy and historical understanding. But in this case no matter was to be made, the lovely Mrs Sands was already married to that remarkable tycoon Mahlon Sands, and to her daughter she bequeathed so little of her beauty (Ethel was indeed downright ugly) that marriage hardly seemed to be a possibility.

On the other hand she did inherit a certain stout moral independence derived perhaps from Massachusetts or Connecticut, a quality which led her away from the glittering mundanity of her parents' circle, and she was, in fact, a very different person. She had settled in Paris in order to make a career of her own as a painter, to lead a life of her own, and with a companion of her own sex, Mrs. Hudson, another less socially decorated daughter of the expatriate community. Together they worked under Carrière and became, in a serious way, painters, accepted as such by their professional colleagues. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Miss Sands might live wherever she might choose to establish herself and despite the fact that Miss Hudson had conceived a positive aversion for this island, Ethel retained so much of her parents' anglophile disposition that she always kept a hospitable home in England and turned away from what was, after all, the undoubted metropolis of painting at the beginning of the century.

This book has very little to tell us about French painting or French painters, her only intimate French friend being Jacques-Emile Blanche, himself very much a *chevalier* between the two countries and hardly a representative of the avant-garde in his own.

It was the avant-garde in England which interested Ethel; she saw a good deal of the New English Art Club in its later years, when indeed it rather lacked qualifications as a revolutionary body, and more interestingly, of that exciting and excited group which found its natural focus in Sickert's studio. It is above all as a major contribution to Sickert studies that this book is admirable. But from Sickert we move naturally to the attempts to found a *Salon des Indépendants* in this country and thence to the brief but absorbing drama of Camden Town and the early years of the London Group, to give Boris Anrep his first domestic commission and, on a number of occasions, to employ Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell as decorators.

In addition to these important relationships with fellow artists she also kept in touch with a more loquacious body consisting (I select at random) of persons such as Arnold Bennett, George Moore, Desmond MacCarthy, L. P. Hartley, Raymond Mortimer, Percy Lubbock, Osbert Sitwell and a great many other writers and critics. At the same time there was a fairly numerous tribe of old friends and relations, some of them very distinguished. All these wrote in her, she wrote to them, and they discussed them and everyone and everything else with her friend, who was so often on the other side of the Channel. As a result she accumulated over the years a very considerable archive and one of very considerable interest. This has been examined and is here used by Dr. Baron. It offered her a very large opportunity, and no doubt it demanded a great deal of work. It could not have fallen into better hands.

Dr. Baron, whose masterly study of Sickert is in itself a major contribution to the study of British art in our century, now establishes a further claim upon our respect and our gratitude. Her book will lead us into the category of those which "one must have" books which must stand on one's shelves ready to be consulted and which, however churlish it may seem, one refuses to lend. Not, in fact, a "library" book, but one which one uses as



Girl holding her young brother, a pen-and-ink drawing done in the early 1920s by Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945). It is one of the items in a large sale of art from the fifteenth to the twentieth century to be held on May 26-28 by Karl und Faber, Amplatz 3, Munich 2.

an instrument, an instrument which, so far as I can see, is well made and altogether reliable.

*Ethel Sands and Her Circle* may therefore be welcomed simply as a contribution to the scholarship of a subject which is still far too little studied. But, of course, it has other claims upon our attention. It is the biography of an extremely intelligent, sensitive and gifted woman, and one whose story would have been well worth telling for its own sake. In most respects, it is extremely well told. Having hinted at a qualification it had better be expressed forthwith, and it amounts to no more than this: that there are in truth a few rather carelessly written passages in what is in the main a simple, unaffected, and straightforward narrative, devoid of jargon and devoid of all those pompous phrases to which writers on art are prone.

There is also a graver fault in the book, but I strangely suspect that it is not the author's fault. The illustrations are not worthy of the text; and I cannot but suppose that it is the publishers who are responsible for their paucity, their poor quality and their ill-chosen aspect. A book about painting, and

one which deals largely with the work of artists who are not familiar to the general public, demands larger, clearer and much more numerous pictures. It is true that we are given Sickert's brutal but lively portrait of Ethel, but in how small and pale a form; of Ethel's own works we are given but three examples; of Miss Hudson's work, which has been praised by eminent critics but which is not generally known, we are given nothing at all. There must surely have been examples available. They have been replaced by photographs, some of which are not very interesting and many of which are those weekend snapshots, so dear to the hearts of publishers nowadays: the usual weekenders, Yeats, Roger Fry, Desmond MacCarthy and—yes—the ubiquitous Ottolenghi. A serious, scholarly and well-constructed book such as this would better have been published without illustrations than with pictures such as these.

In the blur on the cover Ethel Sands is described as "a pivotal figure in English cultural society throughout the first half of this century." I think that the word "pivotal" conveys the wrong shade of meaning. It suggests that Ethel Sands was an active component in

some kind of mechanism. Her life as it appears in these pages is rather one of masterly inactivity. She had the art to become immersed, but not engaged, in the politics of art. In so far as she was active, her activity took the form of assimilation: she knew how to receive and to good terms with Sickert while cultivating George Moore, she could accept her exclusion, on the grounds of her sex, from the Camden Town Group and could do so without loss of dignity or damage to her friendships within the group; even her paintings seemed to be enclosed within the hospitable walls of her own drawing-room, and it was one of her triumphs that she could paint seriously and with dedication even though that drawing-room seemed to be so completely free of the standard of her life. The grand passion of her life, if passion one may call it, was of an entirely un-demanding and unaggressive kind: simply, it seemed, friendship carried to the point of a lifetime's devotion.

She came as near to a belligerent stance as was possible for her in her enthusiastic support of the Allied cause in two world wars, and yet, so far as I can make out, that political attitude never caused a breach between her and her pacifist friends. Even in her whole-hearted condemnation of appeasement, which was fierce, I think that she rather followed Mrs. Hudson's lead and I remember, lunching at Aspegard a few days before Munich, that while agreeing with her friend's general attitude, she could not quite echo that strong-minded woman's positive rejoicing at the prospect of a war.

Thus Ethel's passive, entirely amiable and on the whole very successful attempt to be at peace with all the world made her not so much a pivot as a nexus: not for her the frantic lion-gathering of Lady Colefax or the wild and sometimes imprudent enthusiasms of Ottoline Morrell; rather she was the voice of a serene dedication to the cultivation of friendships which, within the radius of her tea-table at all events, might transcend the antinomies of rival parties and rival personalities. Her achievement appears to me the more considerable in that she was by no means afraid of "unpleasantness". Her extremely funny account of Jacques-Paul Blanche's hapless attempt to bring Sickert and George Moore together shows the most considerable in that she was by no means afraid of "unpleasantness". Her extremely funny account of Jacques-Paul Blanche's hapless attempt to bring Sickert and George Moore together shows the most considerable in that she was by no means afraid of "unpleasantness".

Dr. Baron's book leaves me with a lively regret that I did not know Ethel Sands better. Others will be delighted in reading it to discover that they have come to know her so well.

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# Little Precious from Georgia

By Arthur Calder-Marshall

VIRGINIA SPENCER CARR:

The Lonely Hunter  
A Biography of Carson McCullers  
598pp. Peter Owen, £8.50.

Carson McCullers "may not" have been the genius that she herself, or her mother, Mrs. Marguerite Waters Smith ("Bebe") or Virginia Spencer Carr, her biographer, thought her to be. But she was a dedicated writer, with an austere and highly individual quality. There was not a sentence in which every word and punctuation mark had not been deeply considered. Yet her entire works, beginning with *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* and ending with *The Mortal Fear* published in 1971, four years after her death, would not fill a volume as compendious as this biography. Mrs. McCullers spent thirty-four years writing her short stories, novels and plays. Mrs. Carr spent seven years writing her life. One is reminded of Evelyn Waugh's preface to *Helena*, in which he said that if he had been less conscientious, the book would have been twice as long.

Mrs. Carr has done a tremendous job of research, starting with Daniel Aaron and ending four crowded pages of acknowledgments. Later with Robert Lowell, one can imagine her struggling on, as encumbered with tape-recordings as Laocöon with snakes. Embarrassed with such technical riches, she has found the undisciplined life of so disciplined a writer an impossible task. Though Carson McCullers never wrote except out of personal experience, she would have been defeated if she had ever tried to write her autobiography. It was all she could manage to weave her childhood into her life. Only a biographer with a compassion as great and a far wider sweep could have reconciled Carson's life with her works. Mrs. Carr has the sympathy, as Tennessee Williams' biographer Hilary Mantel has, but unfortunately not the skill.

Writers are the most difficult subjects for biography. How right Eliot and Auden were to will that they should not be psycho-biographed; the faces they showed in their published works and more than their private behavior. Mrs. Carr does not want to denigrate Carson McCullers. But she is so burdened by interviews that she cannot pare her material down to the essentials, which are both more bizarre and perverse than those which Carson chose for her delicate, if limited, work.

She was born Lula Carson Smith in 1917, the eldest daughter of a watch-repairer and jeweller in Columbus, Georgia. Her mother was convinced that she had borne a genius; Carson was encouraged to be not as other children. At six, she was marked out as a musical prodigy and spent hours practicing when her schoolfellows were playing games. Dreams of a dazzling future, of international acclaim, coloured her lonely hours. But first a mysterious illness, probably rheumatic fever, and then the departure from Columbus of her beloved music teacher, Mrs. Mary Tucker, put paid to music as a professional career. Her genius would be displayed in writing.

Carson Smith welcomed the brother Lamar born two years after her; but baby Marguerite, born three years later, was a rival for their mother's affection. Carson, an only child, began what was to become a lifelong pattern, the search for other examples to whom she might attach herself: the "we of me" as she called it in *The Member of the Wedding*. She was a tall girl, 5 feet 8 inches by the age of this year. "Is it cold up there?" classmates teased. It was, spiritually. She felt a freak. She was not accepted by other girls except when she was wanted to play the piano, and even then she tended to play what she did not want. She dressed frantically, like an overgrown Jackie Coogan, with knee-length stockings, a boy's shirt and jacket; the sartorial affirmation of an inner difference. She did not belong in the conventional middle-class Columbus society; but she found affinities with other outsiders, people in the

circus, coloured people, dwarfs, cripples.

Her mother encouraged this sense of otherness, because she and Carson established a special intimacy from which her husband and the two other children were excluded. When members of the First Baptist Church called to know why Carson had stopped going to services, they were appalled to see the fourteen-year-old girl smoking cigarettes with her mother. When gossips queried the advisability of the sixteen-year-old Carson going to "off limits" bars with soldiers from Fort Benning, Smith answered, "After all, Little Precious has to gather material so she can be a famous author someday."

She sold an heirloom diamond-and-emerald ring so that Carson could go to New York and study creative writing at the age of seventeen. Immediately after enrolling, Little Precious lost all her own and her room-mate's money on the subway. But somehow she survived. Still dressed in knee-high stockings and men's shirts, she had a wall-like appeal, with her imploring eyes and limping gait, to benevolent strangers. Sustaining herself with sherry-laced tea during the day and the hard stuff at night, lighting one cigarette after another, she wrote or talked or wrote, obsessively. Teachers and friends were impressed by the strength of her purpose and her physical frailty.

When she was only nineteen, Whit Burnett published her first short story, appropriately named "Wunderkind". At twenty, she married a would-be writer, Reeves

## Suggesting the real thing

By Stephen Fender

JOHN O'HARA:  
An Artist is his Own Fault  
226pp. Southern Illinois University Press, \$8.95.

Poor John O'Hara—go out of touch with the theories of fiction. He did not know that the thin, unstable social fabric of America would not sustain a major realistic novel. No one told him that realism was *kaput*, and his novellas the typical sign of his nihilism. While his relatives were dickensian all over Europe, he wrote for all the world as though he had never thought about what Barthes was later to call the paradox of realism: that it is the very preciseness of the reference that would make the function unreal. Still, the critics got their own back by slighting his best work, the late, long novels, *A Rage to Live* and *From the Terrace*. What they ignored, the public bought, and still buy, in millions.

Matthew Bruccoli thinks we ought to address ourselves to this anomaly. Last year he produced a substantial, serviceable biography, called *The O'Hara Concern*, in which he argued with characteristic forcefulness that O'Hara should be included in the university courses as one of the classic American writers. Now he has collected together O'Hara's public comments on writing, mainly his own. Inevitably this book comes as something of a anticlimax to *The O'Hara Concern*, which cited this material in large chunks. It is mainly interesting for the three lectures on aspects of his novel-writing that O'Hara gave at Rider College in New Jersey in 1959 and 1961. The other items (speeches at literary functions, an essay on Scott Fitzgerald and various interviews) often repeat points made in the Rider lectures, and appear to have been added merely to make up the weight. Even so, the Rider lectures alone justify the exercise.

Each was written out before the lecture was given, but reads now as relaxed and colloquial. That itself is a clue to O'Hara's craft—and his reason for being. In the first lecture he draws the necessary distinction between reportage and mimesis; the latter, he says, is not a matter of



Carson McCullers, 1961

Two years later, the marriage was foundering, but the novel was finished, which when published as *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* brought her fame, money and the prestige which gave her rent-free residence at Yaddo for months on end and a couple of Guggenheim Fellowships. The freak from Columbus, Georgia, had made the grade, not despite, but because of, her freakishness.

The novella *Reflections in a Golden Eye*, bought by Harper's Bazaar two months after her novel was published, gave her the confidence to leave her husband and go to live in Brooklyn Heights with George Davis, Wylan Auden and Gypsy Rose Lee, the greatest stripper of them all. She had fallen in love with Annemarie Clarac-Schwarzbach, a wealthy young Swiss lesbian, physically very beautiful and mentally very sick. It was the first, most passionate and unrewarding of Carson's attachments to members of her own sex. There was as usual a third party in the "we of me", not Annemarie's husband but a German baroness.

In Carson McCullers's books the emotional relationships are simple, though subtle. For example, in *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, she was so complex as the pious Miss Amelia and the dwarf Cousa Lymon. Their love was a reconciliation of two sides of her triangular nature. But she was also Maryn Macy, the destroyer. She was not a truly Southern writer like Flaubert, and though she took a stand on the colour question she was neither a reporter nor political. In her writing, she treated the complex of psychosomatic illness which compelled her to write. No wonder, when one of her adoring women friends asked her why she could not cure her of all her ills by hypnosis, Carson McCullers could not be put into a trance.

Anything was permitted, provided that it was she who gave the permission. She was a tactile rather than a passionate woman, sexually indiscriminate in her love of fondling and being fondled. "Rather a handful", Elizabeth Bowen remarked in other places he his below the belt, exposing the secret economies of literary reviewing:

I am compelled to observe that the critical opposition to my long books is due to one factor: a critic can read and write reviews of three or four short novels in the same time he takes to read a *From the Terrace*. A critic who writes, say, three 500-word reviews a week, is irritated by a *From the Terrace* because after spending all that time—*all that time!*—reading my long novel, he has only the material for a single review. It's as simple and as disgusting as that.

This is an example of O'Hara's famous bad temper against critics, of course, but perhaps it was justified. Perhaps he was right to claim that *A Rage to Live* marked a new turning point in his fiction, "a technique more than merely construction" and that with it he moved from the bush to the major leagues.

After all, the much-praised early novels exhibit faults. It is never entirely clear why Julian English and Gloria Wadsworth should have died within them. Perhaps the movement towards their destruction comes not so much from within the narrative as from the contemporary fashion for talented, doomed protagonists. Certainly the influence of Fitzgerald on *Appointment in Samarra* is too, the theme of responsibility, which occurs in all O'Hara's major work, is worked out mainly in personal terms in the shorter, earlier novels. References to prohibition to Hoover and the Depression fit in and out of the narrative field, but are never firmly tied, either directly or ironically, to the foreground action. They are there mainly as chronopolitical pointers.

In the larger novels, however, O'Hara gave himself space to extend his social reference and to operate over a longer period of time. *A Rage to Live* is not just the story of Grace Tate; the narrative point of view never moves inside her head, and the reader, though invited to understand her, is kept from wholly liking her. Throughout the story, not least in the history of Pennsylvania Dutch community. In a sense it is the story of the Tate farm, that

ked on being landed with her while she was working on a novel at Bowen's Court. Dime Edith Sitwell accepted her as a maid of honour, because she was never burdened by Carson's continuous demands.

Her biographer follows Carson's games like a Wimbledon commentator, shot by shot. Version after version of *The Member of the Wedding*, a brilliantly short book, is written, starting in the morning with a lager, continuing with sherry-ice and ending daily with fifths of Bourbon. But there is no compulsion made here between one version and the next. Mrs. Carr's tape-recorder can not think; nor can she withdraw herself far enough from her evidence to summarize, sum up, or deliver a verdict.

The result, despite her adulation, is the portrait of a baring monster, a vampire who appeared to each new person like an exploding flagellum and, like the *desmodus* rufus bat, with a gentle fluttering of wings, began to lap the lifeblood of her host. Even Tennessee Williams, the most loyal and least vulnerable of her friends, found the going tough at times.

Though hailed by Louis Untermeyer as the peer of Tolstoy, Carson McCullers was a great small writer. A woman of many parts, she never succeeded in writing about more parts than she had. In *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, for example, she was both the pious Miss Amelia and the dwarf Cousa Lymon. Their love was a reconciliation of two sides of her triangular nature. But she was also Maryn Macy, the destroyer. She was not a truly Southern writer like Flaubert, and though she took a stand on the colour question she was neither a reporter nor political. In her writing, she treated the complex of psychosomatic illness which compelled her to write. No wonder, when one of her adoring women friends asked her why she could not cure her of all her ills by hypnosis, Carson McCullers could not be put into a trance.

Wilson's concern for the defenceless dead was in keeping with his notions of privacy. There was a time to "tell all" and a time to be silent. He distrusted the squads of academic detectives dredging up items about his own life and the lives of his friends, and he could not get used to finding his "own day before yesterday" turning up as literary history. Most biographies of writers he knew personally seemed to him badly written, misleading, wanting in selective detail, and full of mistakes as well, either because of sloppy research or because the biographers with-held revealing facts.

Wilson's biographers should make fewer mistakes if only because he was one of those writing animals John Jay Chapman referred to who leave "a cocoon as large as a haystack". His letters contain information about his own life and others that is hard to come by: changes of address, literary enthusiasms, friendships and antipathies, professional activities and political involvements. They chart the cyclical changes of his emotions up and down, they trace the genesis and development of his books. Wilson, the busy journalist, dashed off a number of notes to request or supply information or to acknowledge letters received, but his correspondence also includes carefully composed, essay-like statements on a profusion of topics. Witty, serious, didactic, critical (the photographs sometimes marked with interlinear corrections and appended afterthoughts), and written in a precise and felicitous prose, they comprise a lively if unsystematic personal history of a gifted man and his literary generation.

He was not a self-conscious letter writer, or one who tried to outdo the studied mannerisms of a Henry Adams. Nor did he resort to artifice or entangle himself in circumlocutions. The young, middle-aged, and old Wilson speaks directly through his letters, which are spontaneous and informal for the most part and which undisguisedly reflect his changing moods. On occasion—in response, perhaps, to the misery of a friend or a public outrage or a personal challenge—he can become eloquent, even passionate, but that is not his prevailing tone.

The letters are far-ranging and diverse but they are essentially about literature and literary culture; subjects that for Wilson embraced the conventional genres of literary history and philosophy, the lives of writers, living and dead; and, to use his words, about "all the constructions of intellect and imagination, from poetry, drama, and fiction through Whitehead (metaphysics is the poetry and fiction of people who do not produce concrete images) to Einstein". Writing he considered a discipline as well as a profession. It had its obligations, which often brought the writer into conflict with the values of the commercial world. To stick to that code took strength and character, something akin to heroism. It required besides a certain kind of self-effacement, a subordination of the personal to the public, the personal note to facts and evidence. "I have always made 'validity' rather than 'authenticity' the criterion," he wrote in one of his letters. Edmund Wilson's career in all its phases contrasts sharply with what the valid literary life with its penalties and satisfactions is all about.

A dedication to literature is apparent even during his preparatory school days when young Wilson, luxuriating in books and enjoying the "prize" of seeing himself in print, adjudicated the claims of Kipling, Stevenson and George Borrow. Nothing in his early letters points in any other literary direction. Family tradition alone would probably have ruled out the likelihood of his choosing a business career, and he was grateful to Princeton for giving him "a sort of eighteenth-century humanism" and for tolerating whatever "it takes too seriously the ideal of the successful man".

Even before he graduated from college, he was making sentences judgments tinged with self-irony on art and life, announcing intellectual allegiances, turning out precocious parodies, and choosing as his models writers who were not only a style met his exacting standards. Boswell, fascinated by the glamour and charm of life and telling "the strict truth about it", had "the true creative genius, which Macaulay—honest, dogmatic, and stubborn like Samuel Johnson—was to be emulated for his scrupulous thoroughness, his sound literary conscience, and his knowledge and acceptance of his own limitations".

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# The letters of Edmund Wilson

By Daniel Aaron

Writing to his old friend John Dos Passos in 1965, Edmund Wilson explained why he had denied requests to make Dos Passos's letters available to people who are writing about you. "I have refused, on the principle that it is only when people are dead that it is time to publish their correspondence."

Wilson's concern for the defenceless dead was in keeping with his notions of privacy. There was a time to "tell all" and a time to be silent. He distrusted the squads of academic detectives dredging up items about his own life and the lives of his friends, and he could not get used to finding his "own day before yesterday" turning up as literary history. Most biographies of writers he knew personally seemed to him badly written, misleading, wanting in selective detail, and full of mistakes as well, either because of sloppy research or because the biographers with-held revealing facts.

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The First World War postponed Wilson's literary plans. He enlisted in the medical corps as a matter of course and without illusions, having no hankering to kill Germans or save democracy. The letters depict the war he observed as an unimpaired curiosity, ineptitude, and waste, yet remained peripheral to his never-to-be-realized hope of owning and editing a "powerful publication" and less real to him than the ideas he was storing up for "my forthcoming books". The painful scenes he witnessed as a hospital orderly and which he was soon to incorporate into his first stories did not interrupt his routine of reading ("my sleep has been literary") while still in uniform he plotted his future: he would "work on some liberal magazine or newspaper" and do something for the literary credit of America.

The mood of Wilson and his friends at the end of the war in which most of the best service was at bottom less despairing than readers of their fiction and poetry might imagine. However disenchanted and cynical they sounded, neither they nor their country had suffered irreparable damage, and they conveyed their disgust with America's business civilization in a high-spirited way. They had their breakdowns and crack-ups, to be sure, and Wilson commiserated with the literary generation's public and private despair. With untypical grandiloquence in 1922, he could fault his Princeton mentor and friend, Christian Gauss, for ignoring stereotyped notions about "happy youth" and he resorted to the most violent imagery to describe its disasters: "painful partitioning", "drowning men", "extreme disgust with life", a "background for wild beasts. All the best letters of the 1920s are generally bleak and expectant. He was too stimulated by the American scene, too deep in the Great Cause of literature to sink into the pessimism he sympathized with yet deprecated in some of his friends, who were overwhelmed by personal problems and at odds with or in flight from Philadelphia.

Most American writers, he acknowledged, "Whitman was a notable exception—had written books 'to tell what a terrible place America is', but all of this 'devastating criticism' cleared the way for its becoming culturally inhabitable. Far from suffering neglect, the American 'highbrow and artist' was now endangered by unwarranted attention and the ease, as he put it in a letter to Fitzgerald, 'that a mediocre writer and half-educated public (I mean the growing public for really good stuff) can be impressed, delighted, and satisfied'. It was an encouraging sign that Americans were at last beginning to speak their own language, to speak the language of artists to effect a commercial and industrial society whose only cultural foundation was 'one layer of eighteenth-century civilization'. He was prepared to argue at the end of the 1920s, and the less, "that our civilization is in something far superior to anything previously known and that it is our high destiny to step in and speak the true prophetic words to decline

admirable and usable in their writing. He had also noted their deficiencies, the critical appraiser invariably checking the enthusiasm. Brilliant John Jay Chapman, so robust and unaffected and elegant, the quirky moralist and the finest exemplar of "a trained and public-spirited caste", was intellectually wayward and insensitive to new forms of literary expression. Honest and learned Paul Elmer More knew what he thought and said what he meant; his philosophical system embraced all culture. But he was a prig. He could not respond disinterestedly to art that clashed with his prim and arrogant aesthetic. Van Wyck Brooks, more to Wilson's liking, was at his best a beautiful and incisive writer and conversant with European literature. He showed how one could criticize American culture without ceasing to love it. He believed in standards. But he had nothing of interest to say about philosophy, politics, or economics. He was not really a sensitive discriminator. His literary judgments never deepened, and he recoiled from the modernists. James Gibbons Huneker, on the other hand, welcomed the new and the different. He was a kind of showman for the arts, a man to be admired for his versatility and pro-

fessional competence—but he was more enthusiastic than punctuating. H. L. Mencken seemed to Wilson a writer of authentic genius as Huneker was not, but Wilson esteemed the prose writer of originality, the professional journalist (the best by the way, the great natural hurler of dead cats, not the excoriator of bores and the bogus Nietzschean).

The young critic who held these opinions was better equipped than most of his generation to instruct educated Americans who wanted to be instructed without being bored. He had acquired a solid background in classical and foreign literatures and had learned to elucidate complex ideas precisely in rhythmic, "well-drilled" sentences. Although he disclaimed the posturing of literary Bohemia, he was an avid student of European modernism and demonstrated in his own writing and attitudes his links not only with traditional culture and history but also with the new and experimental.

If Wilson sharply disavowed the anti-modernist opinion of Paul Elmer More and Van Wyck Brooks, he wanted like them to call attention to the variety and freshness of the national literary landscape. His almost proprietary feeling towards the country he alternately defended and chastised derived in part from what might be called ancestral conditioning. Family ties reached north to New England (he frequently referred to his connection with the Mather line while disclaiming any admiration for the

ing Europe". Such was the role he envisaged for himself and his literary fraternity, men and women writers whom he had known during and since his college days and whom he regarded as contributors to *Vanity Fair* and *The New Republic*.

A chronic scepticism, quickened by his reading of Charles Beard's historical writing, worked against this optimism, and Wilson himself had no aptitude for the prophetic role adopted by some of his evangelical friends. But he belonged to the American family of Matthew Arnold, the patriot-castigator and spreader of light, whose view of culture is best expressed in Lionel Trilling's definition: "the locus of the meeting of literature with social actions and attitudes and manners". Intellectuals, Wilson believed then and later, "ought to identify themselves a little more with the general life of the country". He hoped to prove himself "a soldier in the Liberation War of humanity" and to speak for the "younger generation" who were "knocking at the door".

When he assumed his place as the armed critic in the 1920s, he had read the cultural pundits and missionaries who preceded him and singled out what he considered

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Yonkers) and to the South. The Talcottville house in New York State, however, represented a quintessential America for it gave him some sense of how Americans used to live and provided spiritual sustenance. As the frequent backward glances in the letters might suggest, he had not cut himself off from the past. Wilson gladly learned the old ways of the past, and the pull of the past grew stronger as he aged. He and his college mates may have gleefully violated the taboos of the fathers, but the ravens between themselves and their elders strained without snuffing familial bonds, and they carried with them into the 1920s some late-Victorian tastes and biases.

Wilson had tried with considerable success to emancipate himself from the marks of his class and to acquaint himself with the America outside the confines of Princeton. Thanks to his war experiences as a private and noncommissioned officer, he discarded the snobberies of his class and learned to be attracted by the lives and culture of minority groups—Indians and Jews and other immigrant minorities. He would even claim in the 1960s: "I seem nowadays to be obsessed with minorities, feeling that I belong to one myself." Yet what he said of his father (whom in his later years he came more and more to resemble) might have been applied equally well to himself: "He was completely without snobbery of race or class—but though he dealt with people strictly on their merits, it was always to some extent de haut en bas." From his forays into the American hinterlands, Europe, Italy, Israel and Canada, Wilson sensed literary and linguistic treasures, new customs and ideas to mull over, new friends to correspond with, but the society he returned to was comparatively small and exclusive. It consisted of a few friends (many of them women), classmates, poets, novelists, critics, scholars. He took to learned and witty people and quickened at the vibration of talent. He suffered in the company of the duller than most. His idea of one kind of hell was the cocktail party, an occasion where civilized social intercourse gave way to gossip and jokes.

Cocktail parties belonged to the category of "idiotic trifling," he had once been given to say, and early in the 1920s, when "idiotic trifling" had resolved to divide his time between work and disciplined dissipation, he was not the only one of his generation to take his drinking and conversation seriously, but a number of intimates and contemporaries had more trouble than Wilson did in rebounding from their moral, mental, and physical collapses. For these casualties, Wilson the editor and counselor of the literary fraternity had compassion and advice.

Friends in the doldrums or in deep depression got special messages full of understanding and encouragement. A "sacred" and tender letter he wrote to Dos Passos consoling him after the death of his wife, in an elegy on a whole life behind him, with many things that we could never have again. Fitzgerald "needs companionship more than Joyce, because his contemporaries have done him less justice." Wilson writes to John Peale Bishop, and he summons Bishop to the sacred vocation: "I'm sorry you're feeling exhausted—but come! Somebody's got to survive and write."

He never lost this conviction about the artist's "obligation not to let the sick world down," and about the efficacy of work as an antidote for the spirit. Many of his friends had suffered nervous collapses in the 1920s—Zelda, Fitzgerald and Philip Rumanov—to name only two—and the 1930s were to take their literary toll. Wilson himself wrote of and-on and-on depressions. He had undergone "a sort of nervous breakdown" in 1929; it was with this experience in mind that he could write to Louise Bogan, herself then in a sanatorium, of his hereditary "dipsomania." He found it impossible to be alone. Now, despite his gloomy moments, he thrives in solitude. But it is better to be alone outside a hospital than in it. Why doesn't she try to give literary expression to your internal conflict and rankings?

Once you get the experience out of your system in a satisfactory literary form, you can thumb your nose at the world." Here, in brief, is his "world," and the how theses "out of" his mind.

writer's life" come "the glories of his work."

Every literary friend of Edmund Wilson probably received one or more admiring letters on his or her novel or poems or essays; even an enthusiastic commendation was sure to contain at least a remark or two on an error in fact, a mistake in diction, or some other lapse in style or content. Wilson gladly learned but he even more gladly taught. He never hesitated to inform, to correct, to set his correspondents straight. The more intimate the friendship, the more unashamedly critical he became, a measure of his paternal concern for the success and reputation of his friends. Of course it was they who requested his inspection, and one is more impressed, finally, by his generosity and kindness than by his impatience with particular specimens of what his friend Menckel called the "Professorial." He challenged them on the ground that they were not scholarly enough and lacked the sense of the "paraphernalia of research, and he had harsh things to say about the "pedantic and expensive editions" of American authors sponsored by the Modern Language Association. The rejection of his own project to get out "the American classics" in a series "well but not pretentiously edited" and "not impossibly priced" he attributed to the opportunities in the academic hierarchy which had come "to dominate the field of American literature." Wilson had the most cordial relations with a number of professors and students, it should be added, but he thought academic life, which demanded constant association with unformed minds and discrimination in the spirit of one technician to another and accepted criticism in turn without resentment. His candor may have exceeded his tact, but he could not bring himself to soften his objections to what he considered obnoxious political or religious ideas, the target of a rough assault might be mollified by comradely expressions of esteem which critical success does not.

For more than forty years he alternately praised and lambasted John Dos Passos in a series of letters remarkable both for their specificity and for their good-humored, Wilsonian, tolerance of Dos Passos's warmest champions in the 1920s and 1930s, but even then, when he was more in sympathy with his politics than he was during Dos Passos's Goldwater

period ("your article about the San Francisco convention sounded like a teenager squealing over the Beatles"), he kidded him for making American life unacceptably grimy. Here was a novelist who enjoyed life and yet who considered it a duty to make all ideas appear phony and "All women obvious bitches." Every one of his characters seemed "to get a bad kind of breakfast." This particular kind of grumpiness and pessimism is rarely present in Wilson's letters.

Occasionally his efforts to enlighten were angrily rebuffed, as the long-drawn-out quarrel with the group of academicians mentioned in the letters will indicate. Wilson had no bias per se against academics or contempt for scholarship, but he did not try to hide his impatience with particular specimens of what his friend Menckel called the "Professorial." He challenged them on the ground that they were not scholarly enough and lacked the sense of the "paraphernalia of research, and he had harsh things to say about the "pedantic and expensive editions" of American authors sponsored by the Modern Language Association. The rejection of his own project to get out "the American classics" in a series "well but not pretentiously edited" and "not impossibly priced" he attributed to the opportunities in the academic hierarchy which had come "to dominate the field of American literature." Wilson had the most cordial relations with a number of professors and students, it should be added, but he thought academic life, which demanded constant association with unformed minds and discrimination in the spirit of one technician to another and accepted criticism in turn without resentment. His candor may have exceeded his tact, but he could not bring himself to soften his objections to what he considered obnoxious political or religious ideas, the target of a rough assault might be mollified by comradely expressions of esteem which critical success does not.

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friends were reduced to doing hack work. In some respects, the 1920s offered a more favorable climate for a beginning writer, since a large number of publishers were competing for promising talent and the neophyte could survive on a small advance. But even then Wilson felt that publishers in New York were turning literature into a cloak and suit business "with its inevitable talking of shop, and general unfitness of its victims for any kind of activities other than their professional ones." His own dream of the writer's survival and improvement for him the desirable literary life never materialized.

Put in the simplest terms, this meant to be a literary editor and to write books. It meant working in the city and enjoying its amenities but with a pastoral retreat in the offing, perhaps in New England, where the old Puritanism of learning and committed minders in the name of God. Damned by dollars, Wilson developed a workable if not entirely satisfactory strategy for having at least a slice of his cake and eating it. He took on literary chores and stayed longer in the city than he cared to, in exchange for working holidays in rural Connecticut, the Cape, or Talcottville, where he could read and write the books that really interested him. From the 1920s on, he rarely earned enough to build up a margin of security, but during the post-Depression years, as he watched younger writers—unsure of themselves and disinclined to swim against the current—sell their skills to Hollywood or the Luce publications or Reader's Digest or Washington, he ingeniously contrived to find outlets for his writing which would leave his values intact.

To keep himself afloat as a freelance writer, Wilson learned to drive hard bargains with publishers, most of whom he regarded as Henry Adams did Congressmen. He learned to husband his materials, and not waste words. As a journalist facing deadlines, it was hard for him to find the leisure for what he called in a letter to John Dos Passos "a strange, writing-in-the-writing that could only be done at a moment of prolonged stillness—and it was not easy to write even then. Every writer required his *recueillement* (a word that appears several times in his letters), his time of la-gathering, and collecting. In order to earn his living of peaceful contemplation, Wilson had to find a "close-range" writing, or what he called without apologies, "journalism."

All of his books, but especially his novels *I Thought of Daisy* and *Memoirs of Hecate County*, as well as nonfictional works like *Axel's Castle*, *The End of the Road*, and *Patriotic Gore*, evolved through a similar intellectual process. First came the plan or outline of the work. Thereafter it unfolded in the form of notebook entries, letters, sketches, book reviews, and magazine articles. Emerson once described his habit of extracting passages from his letters and journals for his essays as "rowdiness," but he did not have to publish his books in stages, as Wilson did. Denied the time and money to write those without interruption, Wilson had to compose them in segments ("dress rehearsals" was his name for them) and then to solder the prefabricated parts.

Wilson considered journalism a "serious profession" and one that involved "special problems" for the journalist. He chief of them being to get editors to pay him for what he wants to write. This view of Wilson as a mere popularizer and diluter of high culture betrays an ignorance of his intention and range of interests. In his capacity as literary editor, he had to review all manner of books. He married, as he said of Poe, Shaw, and Eliot, "to be brilliant and succeeding even about works of no interest," and, in the course of writing this kind of journalism, "to formulate general principles." Wilson objected to the attitude that he mediated "between art and society." He preferred to think of himself as doing for important and sometimes difficult writers what Shaw did for Ibsen and Wagner: "to give popular accounts of them," he wrote, "and to give people to read them." He had a close, independent relationship with his writers, an understanding of their position as

his own moral and artistic principles without being dull.

When Allen Tate, with whom he happily wrangled for decades, once accused him of "making art out of science" as a program for the "coming generation," he replied that both were "merely aids to getting by in the world." Tate was right. The writer's field of experience and so comfort and reassurance and, in proportion, actually make it easier for humanity to live and improve itself. The end is not art or science but the survival and improvement of America; these words were written in 1931, a time when political issues preoccupied him, but almost anything he wrote before and thereafter called attention to a matter—historical, religious, scientific, or ideological, as well as literary—that he deemed of social consequence.

The privilege of speaking his own mind and of being free to persuade his readers to accept his point of view was essential to him, and he insisted on reserving that right when he filled the book reviewing slot on the *New Yorker* in 1943, although he was scarcely in a position to bargain. Before agreeing to take the job, he stipulated that the magazine would print what he wrote, "unless I choose to suppress my articles altogether."

By this time he had mastered his own style of book reviewing, by turns misanthropic, invective, and argumentative. His reviews and essays were neither impressionistic nor scholastic. They usually explained the author's general ideas, his point of view and temperament, the kind of effects he produced, and they gave advice that the reviewer was familiar not only with the author's other work but also with the subject itself, since Wilson, for reasons already given, developed the practice of reviewing books having some relation to a subject he was currently getting up. During the literary wars of the 1920s and 1930s, he more usually than not delivered his blunt judgments on both literary and social matters as a *pari passu*.

At the outset of his career, Wilson sided with the "Older Generation" against the "Younger," without ascribing "his own private virtues and preferences to a whole movement," and he found himself "in a minority" and "fueled himself" by the "entirety and appeal of Emerson and Thoreau," "real artists," he wrote to John Peale Bishop, who wonderfully conveyed "a sort of mystic exaltation of the spirit, a life above the debasements of the real life." But he added that he over-emphasized what a single person could do "merely by wishing his hands of social obligations and precisifying virtue by himself." In the twilight of the 1920s, he was not alone in an even stronger social life than he had before. The great writers he had been reading and interpreting—Yeats, Pound, Joyce, and Eliot—no longer seemed as useful guides for a disoriented "youngster" like he was. He was not alone in his thoughts; he was not alone in his action; they sacrifice the will to a lonely meditation. He could no longer tolerate this "romanticism" and was ready in 1930 to defend and encourage writers less gifted than the major ones. He had discussed in *Menckel* how he was trying to create a social and idealistic literature. The trial and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti proved to be a turning point for Wilson as it was for many of his literary contemporaries. "It revealed," he wrote to John Peale Bishop, "the whole anatomy of American life, with all its class, professions, and points of view and all their relations, and it raised almost every fundamental question of our political and social system. As Dos Passos said, it was, despite the last days before the execution, as if by some fairytale of American, emigrants and obscures had suddenly, in a short burst of intense life, been compelled to reveal their true characters in a 'heightened' and 'exaggerated' form."

Wilson held on to his conviction that no humane society could exist upon a system of economic underpinnings, and he rejected the label of "liberal" (since liberals were neither a political pragmatist nor adherents of principles they espoused). He remained an unrepentant socialist, and he was not alone in his life. As the country moved on

of the Depression into war, his briefly held revolutionary expectations dwindled; by the mid-1930s he had already lost whatever hope he ever entertained in the possibility of the desirability of a communist system. Communism proved to be useful agitators for a time, he thought, but communism itself had always seemed to him too foreign to make any headway with the optimistic, materialistic American public. He could celebrate Marx and Lenin but not their creepy perverts who had given communism "some of the characteristics of a secular church" and completely detached themselves from the humanistic tradition out of which their masters came.

More himself, Wilson decided, had unconsciously played the role of prophet, but it was strange and unpleasant to read his hagiographies—"almost as queer as reading the New Testament." The communist was shipped the Dialectic "as a supernatural power which will bring them salvation. If they trust it, without the necessity of thought or virtue on their part."

"Thought" or "virtue": neither word seemed to count for much among right and left-wing readers of the 1930s. His own generation Wilson reflected had come of age in "one kind of world" and was now having "to adjust muscles socially, sexually, morally, etc. to another which is itself in a state of flux." The corruption and commercialism he had seen operating even during the comparatively innocent 1920s had deepened in the 1930s, thanks to more sinister forms. The Republic of Letters, with its loyalities and comradeship, had fallen apart in a political atmosphere poisonous to art. Partisans of the left and right perfected their manipulative skills, engaged in vindictive campaigns of slander and made political correctness the touchstone of approval. Authors peddling the current acceptable political line, Wilson thought, were likely to be the precursors "of some awful collectivist can which will turn into official propaganda for a postwar state socialist bureaucracy." He gave up his political movement with which he cared to ally himself. Having acted "as a kind of liberal" by "bringing to the attention of the liberals things which they had been disregarding," he was now content to self off from programmatic politics altogether.

America's entrance into the Second World War did not tempt him to reconsider his decision. He found writing marginal or intellectually snailish about it and did not bother to hide his contempt for those who now condemned as "irresponsible" their once passionately held anti-war opinions. Needless to say, he was no loss an anti-fascist, but he refused to believe that Germany's defeat would leave the world much better off than it was before. Already he was formulating his bio-economic explanation for national aggression (more and more movements may be "motivated by ideals and moralities," but wars are "battles for power" fought by men and animals); already he detected a war machinery at work beneath the

camouflage of public rhetoric. The Cold War aftermath made the task of accommodating himself to the new America all the harder. Increasingly he deplored the glorification of American tradition, a sign, he felt, that the tradition may be dying—as Vergil and Horace celebrated the Roman ideas and virtues when Rome had just begun to decay. Anti-American propaganda, he wrote to Faulkner, was abetted by the national effort to combat it, and he wondered why a writer whose books were the best propaganda any nation could wish for allowed himself to be used in the national propaganda effort. "The American ideology is not to 'have any ideology.'"

Out of sorts with a country whose contemporary culture he found repulsive, and with a government made him feel inferior, Wilson spurned the chance to become a salesman of national culture or a "harbinger for Pan-Americanism." He carried on in his independent and often irascible way.

But the Devil, as Wilson portrayed him in his fables, prepared other temptations for the artist: intellectual besides his power; he also offered him the narcotic of religion. Wilson did not have to rely upon his "principled obscurity" to use one of his sturdy phrases) to withstand that bait. Although no self-declared atheist ever had so many Bibles on his bookshelves, he bridled when Allen Tate called him a Christian ("a malicious libelous and baseless lie," accused clergymen with favored exceptions) and he posted against the secular and spiritual impostures of organized churches. His anti-supernaturalist bias probably accounts for his resistance to most kinds of religious writing and to mystical experiences, gods and creeds. People fell back on religion when they became discouraged about social improvements, he maintained, and lost their nerve. Like the narrator in *Memoirs of Hecate County*, with whom he must not be confused but whose history embodies some of Wilson's ideas and experiences, he adhered to his professional code in lieu of a religious one, to the "incorruptible lie," to what the narrator calls "my old solitary self, the self for which I really lived and which kept up his austere virtue, the self which survived through these trashy years."

Grim and splenetic as Wilson can sound when he has the bit between his teeth, when he is deifying the powers of heaven and earth and giving his readers a piece of his mind, the prevailing tone of his letters is cheerful, rational, and matter of fact. Critics who charged him with a total want of humor and insufficient attention to his comic writing, which took the forms of the burlesque, hoax, satire, and fantasy, and ranged from understatement to hyperbole. An unrepentant temperamentalist, he also reflected in his annual Christmas messages, his love of puppets, of conjuring (so full of beauty and poetic implications), and his fascination with magic, both white and black.

Readers of Wilson will recall the presence or immanence of ghosts, witches, and devils in his plays and fiction. He particularly enjoyed Richard Harris Barham's once popular *Legends*, in which the Jacobite and the horrible madman diverging into a dark and distant encounters occur between the representatives of heaven and hell. Since Wilson's eighteenth-century animus against "enthusiasms" and contempt for any sort of supernaturalism made him suspicious of the occult, it might seem curious that the diabolic and the magical should fascinate him. To be sure, he treated the occult whimsically, but Wilson's future biographers may want to make something of the due-ecque inclination. Whether these unearthly visitors emerged from the pit of Wilson's unconscious or were emblems of some social malice affecting America, it was almost as if the collector of supernaturalism was letting it slip through the back door of his imagination, or as if the spirit of his Mother ancestors was silently intruding. Ordinarily, the children of light in his fables (and they are few and far between) resist subterranean and terrestrial demons, but Wilson never minimizes the stiff price of rectitude.

Each of his books stakes out a Wilsonian position—for example, the importance of American literature; or defines a social evil; or argues the claims of non-American cultures; and the defects of our own; or offers an opinion on the origins of war; or presents a dignified apology for individualism and a warning against bureaucratic conservatism. Each volume of miscellaneous writing contains a caveat against wordmongering and the immorality of opaque prose.

Predictably, the letters reveal this same concern for language. In giving one of his correspondents a "combing," he would couch his objections gently but not mince his words. The writer had an obligation to his readers. His business was to communicate his thoughts clearly and precisely, without sacrificing variety or sensibility. He ought to respect the language he used, and not set his readers' teeth on edge with fuzzy statements. To a correspondent whose sense of vocabulary and syntax struck him as unreliable, he recommended a dose of Muriel or Poe or other writers with "clear and accurate expository styles." Watch how they "manage their sentences," he advised him, "and the terms they have evolved to convey their ideas." There was no better way of studying "the machinery" of style (the metaphor is revealing) than to write imitations. Worn-out phrases, solecisms, slovenly diction, "fashioned abstractions"—all these disguised meanings and were socially as well as aesthetically intolerable. Like George Orwell, with whom he corresponded, Wilson equated debased language with social disease.

His penchant for concreteness and clarity lay behind his injunction to read foreign writers in the original, not through the blur of translation. He had no interest in Spanish, a language he could have easily learned, because he did not care for Spanish literature. German literature exerted a fitful attraction, and the paucity of references to German writers in the letters is a clear reflection of his distaste for the literature itself. But Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Russian, Hebrew and Hungarian opened fresh new territories to him and he regretted late in life that he was too old to start Chinese. Always "greedy for words," it relaxed him to learn new ones in a foreign tongue, even though he discovered as he got further into it that people said the same things in all languages. He took an almost sensual pleasure "in attacking a new language, especially if it has a strange alphabet whose barriers I find I can penetrate."

Language remained an escape and a challenge to him. As friends fled off and he received unwanted attention from the Federal Revenue Service, his thoughts strayed to his childhood before "the big money-making era." During the Depression "even the tail end of the old culture and family life" seemed worth having; by the 1950s he linked his youth to an era from which I'm not sure I'm capable of emerging," the "frivolous twenties." Ten years later he found it "comfortable" to relapse in the post-war "American Renaissance" when the country was less demoralized, and "restful" to read the memoirs of the Edwardian age.

Still, he pressed on with his work despite a cardiac condition, money problems, and the unsalubrious political climate. He planned new books and began to edit his textbooks for future publication. Periodically he completed more ruefully than bitterly, that he was feeling "the onset of senility" and that the United States was getting him down. The letters of the early 1960s contain several references to the Abominable Snowman, whom, were he young, he would like to search for in the primitive unsullied wilderness. He was incensed when the critics began to speak of him as mellowing. Meanwhile, he put in his thirty-fourth hour at his desk in Wellfleet or Talcottville.

Edmund Wilson, a serious professional writer, practiced what he believed. He gave to the profession and to his readers the dedication and responsibility encompassed by the words: to "professed" literature. According to his literary creed, the imagination was to be placed at the service of society, the writer to be neither the cold abstract scientist nor the self-indulgent anarchist. The drift of Wilson's life was away from subjectivism and romanticism and towards the external world. Hence he rejected the suggestion made to him in the 1920s by Charles Caus that he write "a confession d'un enfant du siècle" as "repugnant to me" and strove "to become more objective instead of more and more personal."

This resolution may partly explain why he never became a

cult figure or attracted the interest in academic sanctuaries that Eliot and Pound aroused. The young are not drawn to him today perhaps because he repressed his own romantic impulses and despised the current strains of "neophilia," because he was steeped in history and the literary past, and because he was anti-religious, though not indifferent to religion, and old-fashioned. He fought a number of battles with the Adversary in his various incarnations (or better, counter-attacks) but without remarkable success. Politics failed him, but he fell back on the life of the social-minded artist without any public agonizing. He found no message in the annual of history to justify either the pessimist or the optimist. The honors he received were welcome when they took the form of money, but only art provided him with an unassailable refuge. "Every work of art," the narrator in *Memoirs of Hecate County* declares, "is a trick by which the artist manipulates appearances so as to put over the illusion that experience has some sort of harmony and order and to make us forget that it's impossible to pluck billiard balls out of the air."

The man who wrote those words was a performer of magic himself. He was also a producer of his own magic. He wrote the words that his letters he observed that the "traditional Punch is jolly in the way he bursts into song after committing his crimes. In England, the male spectators, after seeing him dispose of his family, the landlord, the police, the hangman, the devil—all enemies or impediments to the ordinary man—used to want to shake his hand and offer him a drink."

Edmund Wilson, in his role of the American Mr. Punch, cracked the heads of his own devils—usually symbols of authority, ranging from Stalin to tax collectors—and tried to remove the mental impediments from the minds of his countrymen. Probably most of them would not have approved of his politics or his private life or religious opinions. But to the writers and readers who were refreshed and delighted to the recipients of his pungent, prickly, affectionate letters, he was the moral and intellectual conscience of his generation.

Van Wyck Brooks and Ottobene's *Our Literary Heritage: A Pictorial History of the Writer in America* (250pp. Paddington Press, £3.95) has been published in Britain and the United States in a paperback edition. The book closely follows the themes of Brooks's five-volume *Makers and Finders: A History of the Writer in America*. Both works struch from the world of Washington Irving (c. 1800), through "The Flowering of New England," the Times of Melville and Whitman, "New England's Indian Summer" to "The Confident Years" (1885-1915). *Our Literary Heritage* reproduces more than 500 photographs, prints and drawings (many from the Bettmann Archives).

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Peter Jay



# The spreading of the suffrage

By Hugh Brogan

**LAWRENCE GROSSMAN:**  
The Democratic Party and the Negro  
Northern and National Politics  
1868-92  
212pp. University of Illinois Press.  
\$7.

**STEVEN P. LAWSON:**  
Black Ballots  
Voting Rights in the South, 1944-49  
474pp. Columbia University Press.  
\$25.

As the long battle for Afro-American political participation recedes into the past, and more and more historical monographs on aspects of the subject begin to crowd our shelves, the story is taking on new proportions. For instance, it is now clear that just as it took a century to end slavery, and another to secure racial political and legal equality, so it may well take a hundred years more to achieve full social and economic equality between black and white: some wars simply cannot be won quickly. Certainly the right to vote, of itself, will not do all that civil rights activists once hoped, even though it can now be exercised throughout the Union. On the other hand, with what devastating speed the old order of white supremacy collapsed during the 1960s, the years of what C. Vann Woodward so richly calls "the Second Reconstruction" (The white supremacists, too, saw the parallel with the years immediately following the Civil War, but for them it was anything but a term of praise).

In 1976 a white ex-governor of Georgia was elected President of the United States largely because of the enthusiastic backing of Southern blacks (the majority of Southern whites voted Republican). This simple statement of fact would have seemed mere history had it been offered as a prediction twenty, or even fifteen years ago. So perhaps it is too pessimistic to hold that the remaining work of emancipation will take generations more. And in any case, the victory of the Second Reconstruction "give solid cause for hope that, in the end, even the wrongs of de facto segregation and persistent racism will be righted. They cannot be more intractable than the earlier evils that have been so utterly destroyed.

These reflections have been stimulated by the two works under review, which study different phases of the long march of the American negro to political power. Of the two, Lawrence Grossman's *The Democratic Party and the Negro* is the slighter and suffers from not pursuing its theme (blacks and the post-Civil War Democratic Party) to the formation of the United Negro College, merely its logical terminus. We are given no more than a revised PhD dissertation on half the story—useful but limited.

Still, Mr Grossman is to be congratulated on a solid piece of scholarship. He gives several new touches to what may have seemed an old, familiar subject. Most important, he shows that the Northern Democrats were far more flexible in their attitude to the negro than has commonly been thought to be the case. To begin with they adopted the extreme racism of their ex-Confederate partners; but when they merely led to political defeat, they adopted a "new respectability" by which they competed with the Republicans for the votes of the negro. Of course, they never put their alliance with the white South at risk; the explicit premise of the new departure was that each state must be left to handle race relations as it chose which, of course, meant that the South was free to ratify the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. But in the North the Democrats, no longer bound to express fear and loathing of blacks, competed vigorously for their votes with the Grand Old Party. The Republicans, rather too inclined to take the votes of the freedmen for granted, and increasingly wary, as time went on, of the whole eternal question, were not always competent enough to beat back the challenge, but they tried hard. In short, a healthy rivalry for Afro-American support developed, from which black voters were able

to extract useful gains, notably a series of state civil rights acts (in, for instance, Connecticut in 1884, Illinois and Indiana in 1885).

Unfortunately, by the 1890s both national parties had discovered that too few votes were won, and too many lost, by federal intervention in the South in support of negro rights: such intervention was successfully denounced as an affront against states' rights, as if the Civil War had never occurred. Southern blacks were therefore left to the mercies of the white supremacists: the number of lynchings steadily rose throughout the decade. Northern blacks made no more gains. My impression is that the condition of their race steadily worsened until the First World War (Woodrow Wilson actually introduced segregation to government offices in Washington) but I would have welcomed a chance to test this impression against Mr Grossman's findings. However there is ample reason to be grateful for what he does tell us of a tragic story.

Steven P. Lawson writes, in *Black Ballots*, on a larger scale, and

about a happier time. The few and scattered Northern blacks of Mr Grossman's period, only able to affect a handful of contests in an age of narrow electoral victories, who could have no leverage in the age of landfills that began in 1896, were overwhelmingly re-elected, during the twentieth century, by successive waves of migration from the South. As a result, there are now more blacks outside the South than in it, and they are concentrated overwhelmingly in those heavily-populated states with many electoral votes which any Presidential candidate must carry if he is to win.

As to party politics, the result has been exactly what might have been expected in view of the rivalry of the Republicans and the Democrats in the epoch of the new departure. The New Deal won the minds of the negro vote to the Democratic Party and though Mr Lawson shows that during the Eisenhower years the Republicans made a sustained, if cautious, and partially successful effort to win them back, they abandoned the enterprise after 1960 to run after the elusive rewards of the

"Southern strategy", leaving their rivals to reap a bumper harvest of votes for the party which broke white supremacy. The essential point, however, is unambiguous: the rise of the negro in the North has enabled him to exact justice for the negro in the South from the national politicians.

Mr Lawson faithfully plots the rising curve, from the Supreme Court decision in 1944 (Smith v. Allwright) which struck down the white primary, via the return of black soldiers, clamorous for their rights, from the Second World War, the attack on the poll-tax, the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960, the activism of the Kennedy Administration, the incessant agitation of the 1960s, to the great Voting Rights Act of 1965 which effectively ended the exclusion of Southern blacks from the voting-bonanza.

It is a stirring story, and Mr Lawson tells it particularly well, never raising his voice or losing sight of the dimensions in the black camp as well as the very real constraints under which presidents, judges and congressmen, however liberal, had to act. The politicians,

indeed, are rather to be pitied (with the exception, of course, of the Southern senators—hat day here, Sam Brin, among them—who held up reform for twenty years). They were far from masters of their fate. Most of them had solid sympathy with black rights, but they were too often too right a commitment to the party might ruin their other political course, but in the end the pressure from blacks and liberals was so much, the crime, the South were too flagrant, and they had to be held in spirit of themselves.

Yet they contributed much. Lawson gives due credit to Lyndon Johnson, whose skill finally carried the day, but he also makes it plain that a great deal of essential preparatory spadework had been done under previous administrations, above all that of John Kennedy, every body gets his due—even Vice President Nixon.

This, then, is a full and for monograph, limited only by an exclusive, quite intelligible concentration on the ballot question, has a valuable addition to the books on the shelf.



The cartoonist Vicki speculates on which president of the past century would adopt, from Stefan Lorant's *The Charming Bureaucrat* (1949), a copy of the illustrated history of the presidency from Washington to Carter.

## The rightest of the right

By Noel O'Sullivan

**GEORGE H. NASH:**  
The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945  
463pp. New York: Basic Books. \$20.

George Nash's subject is the search, commencing around 1940 and subsequently carried out by a diverse group of prominent and not so prominent members of the American intelligentsia, for coherent conservative ideology. As his title indicates, it is with the ideas and problems of these intellectuals, rather than with conservative politicians, parties or extremist fighting groups, that he is concerned. For Nash, the conservative movement is a reaction to the New Deal, with a sceptical response, both in America itself and in this country. In America, for example, Louis Hartz, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and most recently, Sheldon Wolin have argued that the very idea of an "American conservatism" is in effect a contradiction in terms, since the whole tradition and ethos of American life have from the outset been so deeply imbued with liberal and commercial values that any American is doomed willingly, to live out his days as a Lockean radical of sorts, or else to isolate himself from American society at large. In this country uncertainty over the conservative movement is a similarly accepted value of, for example, *The Strange Quest for an American Conservatism* (Barnard Critch).

The great merit of Professor Nash's book is that it documents this uncertainty, in a sympathetic but not indulgent spirit, the varied strands in the American conservative debate, as well as relating the debate as a whole to the social course of events in the past three decades. For this the British reader will be grateful, since many of the books, journals, articles, reviews and rejoinders in which the debate has been conducted are often difficult to obtain in this country.

At the most elementary level, there is the question of who the American conservative is, and on this Professor Nash's treatment leaves little to be desired. He offers not only an account of the ideas of William F. Buckley, James

Burnham, Milton Friedman, F. A. Hayek, William F. Buckley, Russell Kirk, Irving Kristol, Ludwig von Mises, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Peter Viereck, but also names only those figures who are likely to be known in this country—but, in many cases, photographs and intriguing bits of personal and intellectual biography as well. Thus Russell Kirk, whose knowledge of Mr Nash's book *The Conservative Mind*, for instance, has apparently carried the conservative intellectual quest for roots in American tradition into his daily life by "living in an old family house in remote Meadville, Michigan (population 200)", and referring to himself as "the last banner lord of the stump country", thereby showing more initiative and imagination, incidentally, than another distinguished American intellectual, J. P. Doolittle, who had to move to a castle in southern Ireland before he could feel fully at home in tweeds.

It is perhaps inevitable that the very thoroughness of this book, which is its great virtue, should create one great disadvantage, which is that the skimming and the sifting, too often done side by side on more or less equal terms. Professor Nash does indeed succeed in imposing some order upon it all, principally by using a tripartite scheme according to which members of the movement are divided up into three groups: advocates of free enterprise, advocates of spiritual reform (or of religious and ethical values), and opponents of communist totalitarianism. It is immediately evident, however, that even within each group the ideological divisions amongst the conservative American intellectuals, as well as their differences in intellectual calibre, are not always clear. Thus, for example, the "free market" is a concept which has little in common; and the same is true of such thinkers as Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, and Peter Viereck. The "Public Interest" is a term which is used in very different ways by such thinkers as William F. Buckley, James

Burnham, Milton Friedman, F. A. Hayek, William F. Buckley, Russell Kirk, Irving Kristol, Ludwig von Mises, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Peter Viereck, but also names only those figures who are likely to be known in this country—but, in many cases, photographs and intriguing bits of personal and intellectual biography as well. Thus Russell Kirk, whose knowledge of Mr Nash's book *The Conservative Mind*, for instance, has apparently carried the conservative intellectual quest for roots in American tradition into his daily life by "living in an old family house in remote Meadville, Michigan (population 200)", and referring to himself as "the last banner lord of the stump country", thereby showing more initiative and imagination, incidentally, than another distinguished American intellectual, J. P. Doolittle, who had to move to a castle in southern Ireland before he could feel fully at home in tweeds.

What makes Professor Nash's subject-matter no less intractable is the fact that the members of the American conservative movement have such disparate intellectual origins. Some, like Voegelin, Strauss, von Mises, Hayek, Kuehnelt-Leddihn, William Schramm (the "father" of *National Review*), Russell, and others, have imported old-world values, but around which such as these there has been a world composed partly of native American disciples which have adopted and modified their ideas in various ways, and partly of other native American conservatives who have arrived at their conservatism by widely divergent paths (Burnham, Kristol, and Whitaker Chambers, for example, having once been on the far left). What is especially valuable about Professor Nash's book in this connection, is the clear documentation of the role of the "New Right" in the spread of familiar European patterns of thought in the more recent American intellectual milieu—the most extraordinary aspect of this being that Nash records, that widespread interest in the most relevant of all European thinkers, Alexis de Tocqueville, has been very much a post-war phenomenon in the United States.

If we ask, finally, how successful the American conservatives have been in formulating a coherent ideology, two conclusions emerge. The first is that while individual instances of provocative and valuable work have been generated by the movement (Edward Bellamy's sceptical study of liberal idealism and welfare legislation in *The Unholy City* being a good example), no "authentic American conservative heritage" (Nash), of a kind which would silence liberal critics like Schlesinger and Wolin, has been detected and intellectually defined. Professor Nash goes no further than to say that the "conservative movement" is "a collection of ideas, a collection of people, a collection of movements" (Nash), and that the "conservative movement" is "a collection of ideas, a collection of people, a collection of movements" (Nash), and that the "conservative movement" is "a collection of ideas, a collection of people, a collection of movements" (Nash).

about the compatibility of the highly diverse components in the pragmatic consensus.

The second conclusion, following on from this and partially explaining the lack of ideological cohesion, is that the word "conservative" in America in 1945, has in the mean time become a fairly respectable one, which no longer requires to be defended, and which is, however, a "puzzle" as Robert Nisbet (with whom Professor Nash appears to sympathize in this respect, see *Encounter*) to regard Nisbet's book as the new messiah of conservatism, in spite of the very vivid implications of which (the example of Solzhenitsyn's companion, Medvedev, has drawn attention to that writer's more apocalyptic pronouncements; and Professor Nash's recent CBS television interview, in which he maintained that the present situation resembled that of China, and that America itself stands on the verge of a "catastrophic" destiny, was scarcely calculated to dispel the impression of a continuing bizarre element in this movement. With Mr Chambers' book in mind, however, we shall not be hasty in concluding that the American conservatives are, in the meantime, Professor Nash must be congratulated for his impressive erudition he has put at our disposal, with reservations, his own subject-matter in a very lively and scholarly and lively mode of handling it.

Volume 10 in the monumental series *The Papers of James Madison* (1791-1799) is the University of Chicago Press's edition of the Madison Papers, to appear in the period May 1977, to March 3, 1788—beginning on the eve of the Federal Convention, which gathered to write the Constitution, and ending with Madison's departure for Orange County, Virginia, after completing his number of *The Federalist*, to a convention. Madison was never, however, a statesman, and his career as a statesman, and his months covered in this volume. The series is sponsored by the University of Virginia; the editor is Robert A. Rutland and Charles F. Mohr.

## Scientific states of mind

By Steven Shapin

**CHARLES E. ROSENBERG:**  
No Other Gods  
On Science and American Social Thought  
273pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £9.45.

Academic disciplines tend to manifest acute vision at the centre of their field of inquiry, and the focus of the history of science has traditionally been upon the rational structure of formal intellectual production. The lay reception and deployment of natural knowledge have, consequently, been phenomena on the margins of that discipline's attention. Similarly, the history of medicine has largely attended to the theoretical medical knowledge, while the study of medical practice has suffered comparative neglect. Cultural history has shunned science, and social history has, until quite recently, evinced an incapacity to perceive and map the unvarnished intellectual assumptions which social action employs.

Charles Rosenberg's work over the past fifteen years has been predominantly situated in these "penumbral zones". While entirely devoted to nineteenth-century American developments, his books and papers are of obvious general interest. If only as exemplars for how both social and intellectual historians might fruitfully learn to reformulate their discipline's domains. *The Cholera Years* (1962) is a masterful analysis of the moral and social interest attached to epidemic disease, providing generally applicable insights into how the connections between social change, changes in knowledge and changes in technical practice may be conceived. *The Trial of the Assassin Guiteau* (1968) charts the conflict between schools of psychiatrists differently diagnosed the role of heredity in the etiology of mental illness, and serves as a model for understanding how esoteric knowledge-communities argue for the social credibility of their beliefs.

*No Other Gods* is thematically divided into two parts, each reflecting distinctive subjects and historiographical orientations which have informed this historian's work. Part Two treats the relationships between two institutional venues, wider social values, and the image and nature of scientific activity in nineteenth-century America. Its main scene is the Agricultural Experiment Station, that curious and important progeny of the American farm lobby's faith in practical knowledge, and the Federal Government's desire to direct farm production towards world market requirements. But its protagonists are the scientists who staffed these stations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and it is with their conditions of work, institutional predicaments, intellectual aspirations and emotional states that Rosenberg is primarily concerned. For it is one of his operating principles that the individual scientist's subjective state of mind is the channel through which contextual influences are exerted and by which they have their effect on resulting scientific work. Hence, Rosenberg's favoured sources of insight are those scientists' intimate, and often disarming, confessions to their diaries; letters they wrote to patrons; wistfully shared reminiscences of German university student days; and angry complaints to bureaucratic superiors. The values so often imputed to German universities were rarely compatible with the sort of scientific work expected by the Massachusetts Experiment Station. Such was the unease of one station chemist, writing in ripe middle age, of his present state and past expectations.

For the scientist, however, but since I have been connected with the expt. Sta. my thoughts have been constantly in close touch with practical men who make their livelihood by cultivating the soil. The question which then, always how can I do this or that to grow better crops for less money. American scientists told confidants and diaries of the despair and frustration which resulted, in their opinion, from being ground

reaction, was, in the middle third of the nineteenth century, one of the most valuable resources in constructing optimistic arguments for the possibility of social reform and human improvement.

To show this, he identifies a basic set of unquestioned assumptions about human heredity which underlay the beliefs of those professionally concerned with the subject and the social discourse of "articulture and educated Americans": all assumed, as our present experts (at least) no longer do, that acquired characteristics were inherited; all agreed that heredity was not to be conceived as a single event, but rather as a dynamic process, commencing at conception and extending through the period of nursing the child; third, they assumed that what was inherited was not a number of discrete "factors" or "qualities", but "tendencies" (or "dispositions" to develop certain conditions), and broad constitutional inclinations; and, finally, few questioned the notion that mother and father contributed to heredity in radically different ways. No increase in empirical data, during the whole course of the nineteenth century, supported a serious challenge to these basic notions. The beliefs made sense of everyday human experience of begetting and getting ill; they answered to technical requirements of predicting "what would happen" as well as providing cultural resources for upholding or criticizing the social order.

Beginning in the 1840s a host of social "policemen" deployed this model of human heredity as a new support for ameliorative and man-

neither Darwinism in the 1860s, nor Weismannism in the 1890s, crucially infiltrated the core assumptions of nineteenth-century American social hereditarianism. Yet by the mid-1880s and 1890s the tone and social recommendations of the polemicalists who employed these basic resources had shifted dramatically. A nascent eugenics movement maintained that the plasticity of human nature was far more limited than had been believed in mid-century. Laws governing mating, sterilization of the feeble-minded, and the criminal, restrictive immigration statutes, were all argued from the nature of human heredity. The optimistic assumptions had not been abandoned; as the tools of changing social interests, they had merely been construed in more rigid formulations.

In this analysis, as well as in an equally exciting examination of biological hereditarianism, Rosenberg's authorial voice, with Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Rosenberg's orientations show fruitful affinities with those of certain social anthropologists. Notions of "how nature is", and especially beliefs about the nature of the human body, are undeniably liable to be deployed to further

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social ends. But people are not trapped by the natural knowledge of their society. They adapt it, shape it, modify it, to suit their interests. They use natural knowledge as a tool, and one of the most important tools, in processes of socialisation. In so far as that special aspect of natural knowledge called "science" is concerned, it will, in general terms, be accorded credibility to the extent that it furthers both technical and social interests. But the two interests always bear upon all bodies of natural knowledge. Would that the number-crunching protagonists in the contemporary race-11 debate could spare the time and passion to learn the lessons of "The Bitter Fruit".

*No Other Gods*, then, is an excellent and important book. It ought to be read by a far larger community than that professionally concerned with the social history of science in America. Especially, it should be standard reading for all those practically concerned with the sociological treatment of natural knowledge, and it may be read as implicit sociology of knowledge. But those who would read *No Other Gods* with this interest face the difficulty that its theoretical and historiographical concerns are largely implicit in the empirical treatments and are rarely explicitly broached. The philosopher Mary Hesse has it that the practice of historians is usually wiser than their theoretical self-reflections: perhaps judging from the few cases where Rosenberg permits himself a theoretical historiographical formulation, she is right again; his "aesthetics of complexity" and his resignation to a "quest for the complex and the ambiguous" hardly do justice to Rosenberg's illumination of fundamental patterns linking human interest to knowledge. As a historian he has exemplified sophisticated sociological theories, and has put a book of more general interest than he, apparently, thinks.

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## Reports from the cultural vacuum

By Robert Pinsky

ERIC HOMBERGER:

The Art of the Real  
Poetry in England and America  
since 1939  
246pp. Dant. £5.95.

The scope and pertinence of Eric Homberger's title should stir any one concerned with poetry in our time. Is our poetry an "art of the real"? In Wordsworth's terms, does it use the real language of men when they are moved, does it choose incidents and situations from common life, does it bring that real language to those real situations in such an artful way that ordinary things are presented to the mind in an unusual aspect—namely, that aspect of the real which shows us the primary laws of our real nature? And, how have the terms of these ambitions toward "the real" been revised since 1939? Since 1900?

Sweeping questions indeed. But in their way they are also practical questions and even, as such things go, urgent ones. This is particularly true, perhaps, when elsewhere scholars like Harold Bloom are trying to tell us that

Wordsworth's Copernican revolution in poetry is marked by the

evanescence of any subject but subjectivity, the loss of what a poem is "about." If, like the late Yvor Winters, one rejects a poetry that is not "about" something, one has little use for (or understanding of) Wordsworth.

In such contexts, Mr Homberger's announced theme ceases to sound like the mere innocuous jargon of criticism. In relation to poetry in English since 1939, "the art of the real" is a phrase, has nearly inflammatory implications.

One must therefore give Mr Homberger considerable credit for understanding central matters; and at the same time, one should try hard to grant him his own terms. Nor would it be fair to expect too much from a relatively short work which bravely invokes such a far-reaching subject. The author's instincts, and his sense of the general idea that there is a tension between social responses and "modernism", or at least between social reality and a devotion to the image, seems plausible at the least. But these faint praise I must damn the form this work has taken.

"This book is not a survey," says the preface, and neither is it an essay unified by any idea or motive. Rather, it is a quasi-narrative, a "documentary" organized by decades, and this method proves to be fatal. The art-of-the-real idea is not developed as a subject, but instead appears as a fairly casual

leitmotif which chirps up awkwardly from time to time. The art of the real turns out to mean something vaguely different on each of these occasions, though usually within the loose, quasi-art of its first definition: a process of transformation and renovation of the possibilities of the real world in which we live. This blank, circular tag is filled in variously, but beyond an unspecified relation to the social realm it remains vague.

This initial disappointment is followed by another. If the relationship between poetry and social reality is crucially important, then it seems to follow that the contrasts between English and American poetry—and their societies—would be illuminating. This problem is so difficult that Mr Homberger could be forgiven for ignoring it, but he actually dismisses it, as though it were settled, with one of his characteristic figures of speech: "Despite the national traditions, Americans and the English have been living out of each other's cultural pockets for a long time. The pickings may have been selective, but they were plentiful." This is how Mr Homberger often sounds, though to do him justice it is the narrative that lures him into such superficiality.

Sedulous, breezy, knowing, the tone too often is that of a television film telling the "story" of something profoundly undramatic.

Thus, "when the war began to wind down in the early 1970s, the poetry bubble burst," and "the initial 'Generation' of which Ginsberg was the star turn," and "new boys included Edward Lucie-Smith, George MacBeth, Adrian Mitchell and Anthony Thwaites." It is bad enough to read in a glib sentence that "Harvard and Columbia were hotbeds of formalism, New Criticism, and literary intrigue," or that "Plath won her spurs with 'Lament,' a perfectly executed villanelle"; this sort of thing—poet, year, flaccid—is even worse when it pretends to social history, as in "everywhere there was [sic] insecurity, loneliness, bureaucratization, conformity, the cold war, and McCarthyism."

Some of these formulaic passages might claim to be defended under the heading of "deliberate parody": the headings of the chapters are headed by jocular, Fielding-esque synopses in the present tense (though one notices *passim* that Mr Homberger is no devotee of tense consistency). For instance, "An angry primitive den arrives, led by Gary Snyder," and "William Carlos Williams takes the measure of American life in *Paterson*," but Charles Olson wasn't impressed. But if this is not a pure, aimless light-headedness, at whom or what is the joke directed? And when we read something as silly as "a group of older poets came in from the cold," who cares?

When he is not performing the March of Time, Mr Homberger rallies considerably. The early sections on Alun Lewis and on MacNeice are often thoughtful and perceptive; later, there are good moments on Berryman and on Galway Kinnell, whose strained primitivism is dissected accurately. And the occasional material that is well suited to journalistic narrative such as the deluge at Oxford of Don Hall in the early 1950s, takes on a gossip, interesting life. (Mr Homberger's point about the lack of urgency in Hall's satirical verses, and the contrast with MacNeice, made me wish that the book took the measure of the American and English writers more seriously.)

Soon, however, we are back to the story, the thread with too few beads, and its false links: "hot on the heels of," and "Merton College was little touched by," and "they were not too young to" and so forth.

A main story which Mr Homberger wants to tell, I think, is *The Collapse of Formalism, or The Failure of the Movement*. (This might explain why the poems of Elizabeth Bishop, Edgar Reyer and Robert Graves are not fit into the story at all, though Jon Silkin and nearly—John Ashbery are omitted for quite different reasons.) But he never dips into this material deeply enough to get past the stale news.

On the subject of Donald Davie, he is incoherent; Davie's "occasional contemporary relevance" we read, is insignificant; but a turn of the page further on Davie is said to reveal "undoubted powers of social observation." As elsewhere, quotations are assembled with an air of proof, but no links are made. The index cards, which flutter almost audibly on to the page, are in an order of sorts, but do not present a form. We can

deduce the book's story and its moral less from a sustained argument than from its guileless wags: for instance, Davie and Larkin are treated in the chapter "The 1950s," while much of the chapter "The 1960s and 1970s" is devoted to Charles Reznikoff and Basil Bunting.

But the book is not polemical in effect, because it is infected with the essential conservatism of easy connections and received ideas. Each stonelike cliché is turned just so far as will not disturb its moss. Sometimes the connection made feels flimsy from the start—does Ginsberg's "shopping for images" really "echo" the same note as Jorrell's "A Sad Heart at the Super-market"? At other times an interesting issue is set up, as in the consideration of Tomlinson *versus* the Movement, only to dissipate into a review of Tomlinson's "poems." Tomlinson's "is a pure, scrupulous poetry, affording a narrow but intense kind of pleasure."

Repeatedly, an idea is put in a way too familiar to be deeply felt or true. Davie's work demonstrates "an argument with Romanticism." Roethke's greenhouse poems "are literally bursting with life." Williams "detects beauty in the random squallor of the ordinary lives of people." With Plath's poem "Daddy," "the 'New Woman' made her declaration of independence; the 1960s arrived, angry and exultant." Larkin has "undoubted skill at construction" and "having found his voice, he has remained faithful to it," along with his "imitations," which include "an evasion of the real world."

As to the art of the real, it recurs regularly, but as a phrase rather than a living idea. MacNeice "wanted to immerse himself in things as they were—to create a sense of the real." Plath needed to learn that the nature of reality "included a consciousness of the self" and that "the central emotions and incidents of life," which in a letter to her mother "she felt Wilbur avoided, were in fact the substance of an art of the real."

These formulations, in themselves, might prove decent starting points, but how can one go beyond them when "the real" is embodied by Sunday-supplement paragraphs which jumble Brandt, Kinnell, Brooks, Brodsky, Sherris, Green, Village, Senator, Tift, CND, the marijuana, the Two Antichrists, the Civil Rights Movement into the most wearisome "quasi-melange" this wordling is the more distressing because it seems to be on the right track. That we live in a social world is one compelling reason for questioning the idea that poems are "about" experience.

The truth is that the defects of narrative and the sins of journalistic documentary would vanish, or would not matter, if the plot revealed a strong controlling idea or action: an idea of the real, or a real sense of the art of poetry. I don't know how to conclude, except by quoting a peroration from near the end of *The Art of the Real*: "We have gone into a period of the most severe privatization of meaning and experience, and there is no knowing how long this cultural vacuum is going to last." He may be right, though this is not the *way* that will tell us whether, as he now says, "about" what is real—which is to say, how poems are real.

## Hello, America

By D. M. Thomas

NATHANIEL TARN:

The House of Leaves  
159pp. Santa Barbara: Black Sparrow Press. \$15 (Paperback, \$4).

Nathaniel Tarn has apparently embraced America as his own since moving there in 1970, and one can see that its expansiveness suits his style. There was always a sense of continental ambition in his work, poems that seemed to wish the pages wider. To read his new collection, which contains most of his work over the past six years, is a little like flying over America: a Whitmanesque grandiloquence ("I must tell you I am ultimately certain which all I can comprehend is to know the Poughkeepsie upon accretion, moving, incomplete

hensible at times, enjoyment tinged with a faint tedium, at times catching the breath blown into State, as State slips unnoticed into State, it is difficult to recall any single poem in *The House of Leaves*, with the single exception of a beautiful long meditation, "Narrative of the Spiders." And yet despite the surface of similar images, similar rhetorical similarities, much of it is beautiful and true, especially in the love poems:

But in every fall I found you hollow  
and as I entered any part of her  
I found him there  
who was entering you in the same way.

at the other end of elsewhere  
The champagne keeps getting served in this handsome jumbo-jet  
of a book from Black Sparrow Press. You might not wish the journey any longer, but the trip is rich, richer and better value than any of our English suburban train-rides.

## SEVEN POEMS BY GEOFFREY GRIGSON after the German of Christian Morgenstern (1871-1914)

### Philosophy is Born

The moorland sheep is frightened and amazed  
At seeing me. What can this mean?  
It means I might be the first man this sheep has ever seen.  
An infectious gaze. We stand and stare as if we were asleep.  
I might in fact be seeing my first sheep.

### The Funnels

A pair of funnels stroll by night. They both  
collect inside themselves the white moon-  
light, so clear, so calm, so bright,  
which then runs down the funnels  
of these funnels, making  
their woodland way  
much brighter,  
and so  
well-  
er.

### Korf's Clock

Two pairs of hands go round  
on a clock Korf's made  
to indicate time advancing,  
and time retrograde.

Ten and two it says at once,  
it says both three and nine,  
and everyone who looks at it  
loses his fear of time.

for on this Janus-clock  
of Korf's ingenious design  
time (as Korf intended)  
neutralizes time.

### The Moonsheep

The Moonsheep on the wide plain stands.  
He waits for the Great Shearer's hands.  
The Moonsheep.

The Moonsheep nibbles a rhizome,  
And goes back to his alpine home.  
The Moonsheep.

The Moonsheep in a dream says he  
Is Space's dark Infinity.  
The Moonsheep.

The Moonsheep in the dawn lies dead.  
His body's white, the sun is red.  
The Moonsheep.

## The overthrow of order

By Andrew Motion

JOHN MOLE:  
Our Ship  
62pp. Secker and Warburg. £2.90.

ROBERT CREELEY:  
Away  
78pp. Los Angeles: Black Sparrow Press. \$3.00 (paperback, \$3.50).

MIRIAM WELLDINGTON:  
The Price — Gold  
112pp. Toronto: Oxford University Press. £3.50.

ALEXIS LYKIARD:  
Milesian Fables  
46pp. Tadmorden, Lancashire: Arc Publications. 60p.

ROBIN FULTON:  
Between Flights  
22pp. Egham, Surrey: Interim Press. 40p.

The first poem in *Our Ship* (John Mole's third collection, but his first from Secker and Warburg) insists that "Only what hurts matters", but in those which follow, the view from on deck is less a seascape of turbulent suffering than a landscape of controlled anxiety.

The wired belly tinkles for stronger meat, those harmonies of suffering beyond the cradle.

It is a process which Mr Mole has undertaken before, but it is handled in *Our Ship* with a control and dexterity which make it his most impressive achievement to date.

Robert Creeley shares this concern with the orderliness of experience (life is, he complains, "endlessly circular"), and also claims that he wants to come to terms with it by concentrating on "specific actual detail." But the poetic techniques that he employs bludgeon into muddle and detail into abstraction. His ambition, inherited from William Carlos Williams, to establish a "distinctly American idiom that embodies the physical labour involved in creating

lars, it jeopardizes *Our Ship* when his response to a genes mellowed by electric cars made too completely in their own tamed image. When "The young in one another's arms/read Notes on Shakespeare" the holybooks in his garden are "pure Tennyson" and history is "safe and distant" you can only wonder whether the potential range and angularity of experience has not been somewhat wilfully sealed in a "regular order."

This order is overthrown, and Mr Mole's avoidance of the large gesture put to its most telling use in those poems which amass and interpret detail insidiously or alarmingly. In "The Fair," "The Disco" and "The Toy Piano", for instance, he wittily converts the familiar into the grotesque without contravening his high standards of alert reserve.

The mouth of the toy piano grins its teeth. It bites habitually on mice and teddy-bears but is dissatisfied.

The wired belly tinkles for stronger meat, those harmonies of suffering beyond the cradle.

It is a process which Mr Mole has undertaken before, but it is handled in *Our Ship* with a control and dexterity which make it his most impressive achievement to date.

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The mouth of the toy piano grins its teeth. It bites habitually on mice and teddy-bears but is dissatisfied.

### On the Planet of Flies

On the Planet of Flies  
it's a poor show for men.  
What they do here to flies  
flies there do to them.

Men find themselves sticking  
on man-papers there,  
or swim round and sink  
in sugar and beer.

On some points I give  
the prize to the flies,  
we're not mistakenly swallowed  
or cooked in their pies.

### The Salmon

To Switzerland, right up the Rhine  
A Salmon swim.

He managed one by one each  
Salmon-dam.

Up, up he went, to God knows where,  
And there,

Twelve feet or more above him, rose  
A weir.

Ten feet he jumped, so well, and fell.  
Dismayed,

Below that Alp three  
Weeks he stayed,

And then turned round at last  
And swim,

In silence, back to Amst-  
—Erdam.

### The Aesthete Weasel

A Weasel (or a Stoat)  
sat afloat on a clote  
in the moat.

Why?  
The Mooncalf,  
off the record, gave me  
this reply:

this aesthete-creat-  
ure sat there

that time  
for  
Rhyme.



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BODLEY HEAD

# TLS Commentary

## Figure-conscious

The human image has in some ways been hard done by in contemporary art; in de Kooning, Giacometti, Bacon, it is uncompromisingly distorted, and hardly pleasing, and in pop art it was too obviously derived from non-painterly media such as advertising, photography and the cinema to challenge earlier traditions of representation. R. B. Kitaj's current show at Marlborough Fine Art (until June 4) is part of a campaign to put this right, to "bring back figuration" and implicitly to demonstrate that a representational language will always be the richest one for painting.

All this is part of the politics of art; and we will have to wait to see whether Kitaj's work, which is above all else a clear alternative line of influence. Certainly these paintings and the interviews Kitaj has given (with Hockney in *The New Review*, with Charles Hockney in *Art Monthly*) breathe a welcome confidence. In saying how much he admires Picasso and Matisse as draughtsmen Kitaj also lets us know that he intends to compete with them.

He is an American expatriate in the sense of Modernist tradition; not afraid to synthesize European influences. However foolishly this may seem, it is better than the knowing attitude of those formalists who are trying to forget history. Indeed, Kitaj's pictures are always alluding to earlier styles, to models as disparate as Giotto and Degas, though without sinking into parody or paraphrase.

But another type of allusion, the literary or symbolic, seems to be less happily handled here. The pictures appear short of that mass of documentation which weighed down Kitaj's earlier efforts; yet their titles tease us into trying to imagine it. Thus Benjamin appears to be present in "The Autumn of Central Paris" (after Walter Benjamin), and the painting is perhaps a celebration of the society which Benjamin admired and out of which so many Modernist ideas came. There is no denying a real psychological tension within the picture, with its overlapping images. But when we ask what motivates par-

cular elements of the picture, such as the red worker wielding a pick at its base, or even the first part of the title, we are forced to realize that Kitaj, for all his admiration of those Moderns we have learnt to explore, like T. S. Eliot, is a very esoteric and perhaps arbitrary painter, who is offering formal rather than "literary" satisfactions.

Similar considerations apply to other major pictures in the show, such as "The Not" (which William Weaver aptly described as "a Piero di Cosimo dreamland invaded by partisans"). The slightly jumpy tone of the description suits the intent of this picture—and others, such as the large double portrait of James Joll and John Gollings where a "missing" section of head suggests a damaged fresco.

Where the whole picture may be taken as a metaphor, matters are easier, though also more trivial. "Communist and Socialist" is a Degas-like pastel in which a man lies on a bed displaying a prominent erection, while a woman kneels beside him; it is a fairly cool erotic study, mildly voyeuristic, like other pictures in this exhibition. How one takes it depends on whether one believes (as Kitaj apparently does) that sex can be a symbol of political reconciliation. Again, "Catalan Christ (Pretending to be Dead)" may symbolize a resurgence of political activity in Spain but whether this is the case or not the painting has a wealth of stylistic resonance, alluding to earlier styles, to models as disparate as Giotto and Degas, though without sinking into parody or paraphrase.

It is in a sense unfair to burden Kitaj with critical comment—like other literary painters, he can be made too much the victim of "interpretation". In any case, his ambiguities reside as much within the picture area, where line so often has a divided formal allegiance, as within the mind of the beholder. Among all the adulatory and didactic formalist art which surrounds him, it is surprising to find painting which provides, rather more familiar and less puritanical pleasures, within a grander tradition.

Christopher Butler

## Fifty years on...

Rosamond Lehmann's *Dusty Answer*, Michael Arlen's *Young Men in Love* and Edwin Muir's first novel *The Marionette* were all reviewed in the TLS of May 19, 1927. The review of *The Marionette* is reprinted in full.

Miss Rosamond Lehmann has written a comedy of youth with its excitement and disappointments, its brilliant hopes, its shocking disasters and disillusionments. *Dusty Answer* is an intense, self-conscious, vivid book that slowly takes a powerful hold upon the half-reluctant reader. Clever young people, feeling their life in every limb and acutely analysing their sensations, are by no means uncommon in life or in fiction: Miss Lehmann knows all about them, she talks to them, and about them and they surround the reader, a clamorous, lively company demanding attention and interest. She has the gift of keeping people distinct; they may hunt in couples, or in packs, but they never echo each other's characteristics. It is remarkable how cleverly the three young men of the story emerge, how truly one sees Mariella, vivid but with a hint of something kept back, how Judith reveals herself. There is a beautiful and distinguished quality in the writing that is uncommon.

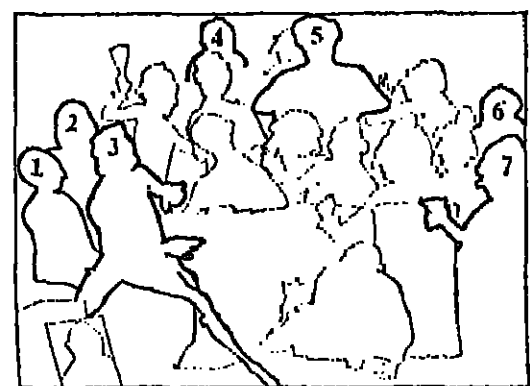
When Mr Arlen, in his new novel *Young Men in Love*, writes of Charles Suvile, a character in it, "In short, he had written a series of smart novels, and then he had written sound novels", one sees Mr Arlen claiming with emphatic gestures that since *The Green Hat* he has reformed and that *Young Men in Love* is a "sound" novel. It is, at any rate, a long novel, and if Mr Arlen means by "sound" that it is built up with thought as well as wit, care as well as elegance, he is right, but unfortunately there runs through the texture of the thought the old, curiously mingled strains of sentimentality and false cynicism.

Mr Edwin Muir's first novel, *The Marionette*, is a curious book: in-

deed, one cannot call it a novel at all, but a conte d'artiste, a purpose of which is obscure. Mr Muir himself, we have no doubt, is sure of his purpose: the carefulness of the writing, the precision of the detail, the obvious rhythm, and the completeness of the construction itself are proofs that this is no thing but a haphazard or capricious piece of work. But the study objectivity of the presentation leads a reader who does not instinctively respond to groups uncertainly for the reason why the emotions and reactions of a half-witted boy should have any but a pathological importance.

The boy Hans Bred with his widowed father, Martin Scheffer, the Kapuziner Berg above Salzburg. His mother had died at his birth and he had grown to boyhood, simpleton with a phobia of white things. A friend secures across the stones would place a terrace. He saw a girl, a terrifying heraldry. With pine and flowers and static objects in spirit was at rest, Martin Scheffer, recognizing his son for what he was, kept aloof from him till Emma, the maid, brought to his notice the boy's fourteen-year birthday. He bought him a doll, and then had a doll's house made for him, and from that moment took an interest in the strange workings of the boy's mind. The day when he persuaded him to go for a walk to the top of the Galsberg, the fearful passing through Salzburg's sinister humours, Hans's fear of the cows whose hoofmarks he saw, and the distressing appearance of the salamander are described with extraordinary vividness; and this is followed by the main episode—namely Hans's infatuation with Herlmann's marionette show, particularly with the representation of Faust and the puppet Gretchen. We are given to understand that the vast task Hans in the marionettes as an experiment, and that he was afflicted by a morbid curiosity about the effect it would have on the boy's mind. The effect it had on the boy's mind, the effect it had on the father's mind, the effect it had on the puppet, which was to him a complete reality, and in which he himself, by a strange doubling, took part. How Martin Scheffer forced this delusion by giving the boy the dress of Faust and procuring for the puppet Gretchen, how Hans, no mean collector himself—hung throughout the mansion. From glimpses of rolling country behind the Romney and Reynolds figures; from summers sampling it with his English mother. From drinking deep of English literature in Yale, and from escaping uninspiring lectures at Cambridge to hunt with the Pynchley and the Quorn, grew the educated passion for British culture celebrated so resoundingly in the Yale Centre. Since April 19 the daylight has been let in, cascades of it, pouring down through specially designed filters set into the roof, to irradiate what must be the most stunning tabernacle

# TLS Commentary



"Caricature Group" by John Hamilton Mortimer (1740-1779), from the catalogue for the exhibition "The Pursuit of Happiness" at the Yale Centre for British Art. It may be the group that met at Feather's Public House, Leicester Field, or the Huddellian Society founded in 1776 with the artist Mortimer as president. Though the precise date of the picture is also unknown it was probably painted during the mid-1760s; the composition and theme are derived from Hogarth's "Midnight Modern Conversation" of 1732 and several of the suggested participants had a close connection with Hogarth or his work. The figures numbered in the key above are (1) Mortimer; (2) the actor John Henderson; (3) John Ireland, Hogarth's biographer; (4) Joseph Wright of Derby; (5) Laurence Sterne; (6) Charles Churchill; and (7) Oliver Goldsmith.

## The Yale Centre for British Art

By Simon Schama

It is a long way from Pittsburgh to East Bergholt; from the pull of the Pennsylvania Coketown where the Mellon fortune was made, to the dappled sunlight of Constable's landscapes. In the very and self-offering forward to one of the catalogues of his spectacular collection of British art, Paul Mellon recalls the "strange mystery of his childhood surroundings. The house was a 'late Victorian, and very dark. The halls were dark, the walls were dark, and Pittsburgh outside was very dark. At night sheets draped the living-rooms to prevent a blue coating of soot from settling on the furniture. The only points of radiance amidst this murky grandeur were the paintings which his father Andrew—no mean collector himself—hung throughout the mansion. From glimpses of rolling country behind the Romney and Reynolds figures; from summers sampling it with his English mother. From drinking deep of English literature in Yale, and from escaping uninspiring lectures at Cambridge to hunt with the Pynchley and the Quorn, grew the educated passion for British culture celebrated so resoundingly in the Yale Centre. Since April 19 the daylight has been let in, cascades of it, pouring down through specially designed filters set into the roof, to irradiate what must be the most stunning tabernacle

erected anywhere on either side of the Atlantic for the visual culture of a single nation.

This palace of earthly delights, all thirteen million dollars of it, like the collection it houses, is the gift of the Moenconas of the Class of '29, who for over twenty-five years has followed his enthusiasm with single-minded determination and unusual discernment. If it seems paradoxical that such a showplace should be located in New rather than old England, it may in part be because Mellon's taste (and his acquisitive appetite) has never been constrained by the general reticence with which we customarily condescend to all but the most manifest masterpieces of the native school. Those

Rows and rows and rows of Gainsboroughs and Lawrences. Sporting prints of Aunt Florence. Some of which were rather rude... lining the corridors of Coward's "Stately Homes of England" have not infrequently been relegated to mere ornamental elegance serving ancestral and anecdotal functions: the fixtures and fittings of what is sometimes projected as a self-consciously philistine life style. Paul Mellon never believed in this *Land ohne Kunst*, and it was the most unregarded genre of all—sporting pictures—which began his career as a collector of paintings. He already had a considerable collection of illustrated books, but in the 1950s, with the late Basil Taylor (a champion of Stubbs before it was fashionable to be one) acting as his

English eyes, he plunged into the omnivorous acquisition of a huge range of paintings, drawings, prints, and more books—16,000 of them in fact—mostly, but not exclusively, concentrated in the period between Hogarth's birth and Turner's death.

The sheer density of this superabundance of treasure is emphasized in the study galleries on the fourth floor of the Centre where pictures talisman each other, wall to wall, and floor to ceiling, in the authentic eighteenth-century manner. So far from being suffocating the effect is exhilarating as well as educative. Surrounding a masterpiece like Constable's "Hadleigh Castle" with a number of all studies of clouds and sky—the wall of the Centre where further exquisite and experimentally at work.

Nowhere is the unabashed delight of the Centre more apparent than in the handsome "Library Court" at its core. Though the architect of the building, Louis Kahn, died in 1974, his conception has been fully executed. The gilding principle is evidently a return to the traditions of fine art galleries: natural light and room-like spaces for the exhibits. Outside, the effect is classical and restrained while embracing the aggressively contemporary materials of glass, concrete and power-finish steel. Within, the galleries are ranged around two tall, open-sided courts, with oak panels set into the exposed concrete; traversing marble strips divide off the room spaces with plain wool rugs on the floor.

The overall effect is rugged but harmonious, and in the three-story Library Court there is space enough to show an ensemble of paintings which together provide a majestic retort to the assumption that British painting is essentially an art of anonymous charm. Dominating the room are the two titanic Stubbs's: "Lion Attacking a Horse" and "Horse Frightened by a Lion" enormous in their liberation of energy and force, and as dynamically violent as anything produced by Caraccioli or Delacroix a generation later. Below them hang four shooting scenes by the same painter in a more familiar temper, demonstrating that immaculate equilibrium of colour and space, the poised tension between motion and immobility that are now recognized as the hallmarks of his genius. Around the perimeter walls are Wilson landscapes, echoing the formal arrangements of scenery and architecture of Cleverly but backing the landscape in that liminal light which beckoned to succeeding generations of English artists. Most startling of all, perhaps, there are late... Galus...

The exhibits have been selected with telling precision. The rage in travel both within and beyond Britain is represented, for example, by Pollard's naive coaching scenes, some of which are painted on the inside of the carriage doors in two-dimensional profile as if they were specifications for a transport bureau's journal. Rowlandson's travellers are dunned by a rapacious "Boulogne downer", and a group of men in "Grand Tour" poses with inordinate mutual admiration against the background of the Colosseum—a snapshot of the mandatory encounter with Antiquity. The fascination with the exotic is

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The fogs of faith and wash-day, thin lives beaten  
Blank and hung to weep, the fair are gone.  
Raw-fingered saints who've tipped their pedestals

And dried their hands at Father Empire's yell,  
They chivy cautious husbands, rebel sons  
With bloodless white. But they'll take the same poison,  
Hands left among his axle-trees and shells.

True warriors, they were furnace-forged by bombs  
That jumped roof-high, from tongue to lung the taste  
Of lead rolled death, massed engines pumped their Somme.

It was a flowering and a laying-waste;  
Man's skills found shining at the heart of woman,  
His vengeance, too, expediently unlaced.

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## Fictional innocence

By Nicola Bradbury

RUTH BERNARD YEAZELL:  
Language and Knowledge in the  
Late Novels of Henry James  
142pp. University of Chicago Press.  
£25.50.

To be true to the disquieting experience of first reading the late James, writes Ruth Yeazell, "we need to recover, if only temporarily, our fictional innocence". Through the plot of *The Ambassadors*, the style of *The Wings of the Dove*, Henry James uses our embarrassment of inaccurate anticipation both to correct and to warn us. Only scrupulous attention to the sequence of our reactions lifts satisfaction from complacency in the appreciation of late James. This problem is particularly acute for the critic. Where so much thoughtful and sensitive work has already been published, "fictional innocence" is a scarce resource. On the other hand, no critic can escape James's own subtle complexity. He can pitch his work where he thinks fit, and alter the pitch often and abruptly. Seymour Chutman has pointed out that the late James style "is a kind of prose that insists upon selecting its audience", and James himself considered that "the employment of a work of art... constituting... our highest experience of 'luxury', the luxury is not greatest... when the work asks for as little attention as possible". The critic, however, selects his pitch with the audience in mind. Dr Yeazell, with a refreshing freedom from the pseudo-Jamesian style so pervasive among his critics, maintains a tone of controlled modesty throughout her well-structured and persuasive argument. She is, however, more readable than original, and the "disquieting experience" of the novels is more consistently asserted than conveyed.

*Language and Knowledge in the Late Novels of Henry James* begins with a warning against "translating" late James into the simpler idiom of the postulated contemporary. "Compensation" after and late James, Dr Yeazell allows that "however we finally judge a figure like Madame Merle, her power over us is limited by the way in which the novel grants her fictional being: yet Charlotte Stant, seeming 'to possess something of the artist's own power...'

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## Critical positions

By Peter Keating

D. J. CONLON (Editor):  
G. K. Chesterton: The Critical  
Judgments  
Part 1: 1900-1937  
555pp. Belgium: Antwerp Studies  
in English Literature. £5.

The general format of this collection of critical responses to the work of G. K. Chesterton is familiar from Routledge's well-established Critical Heritage series. Chesterton has so far not had a Critical Heritage volume devoted to him and he is now, presumably, excluded from consideration for this massive compilation from Antwerp, which is only the first of two instalments, must leave few reviews and assessments worth reprinting.

D. J. Conlon explains in his preface that rather than give just one or two reviews of all of Chesterton's books he decided to present "a fuller survey of critical reaction to the most typical or more important". Even so the method seems exhaustive. The selection opens with a review of Chesterton's first published book *Greybeards at Play* (1900) by, curiously, none of the Chesterton biographers, but by the *Paradoxes of Mr Pond* (1937), both of which were published posthumously. In between there are reviews covering the whole range of Chesterton's bewildering output: novels, poems, short stories, his series, plays, essays, and criticism. Most coverage is given to the earlier novels, up to *Mumfords* (1912) and to

may become for the reader a disturbingly seductive force". The late novels exist in "a world in which the power of language to transform facts and even to create them seems matched only by the stubborn persistence of the facts themselves".

The following chapters promise a more daring investigation of this situation than is actually attempted. "Translations into Late James" "The Syntax of Knowing" "The Imagination of Metaphor"—the titles open a vein of speculation which is only cautiously explored. This approach fits the argument: Dr Yeazell suggests that James's syntax fits his characters' hesitancy. Distinguishing Jamesian meditation from Joycean stream-of-consciousness, she quotes Magda Verger's "Wait, to extend the power of 'the right word', but she does not stress, as James does, the precarious and ambivalent control such phrases represent, and the in-

## Biographical brevity

By Morchard Bishop

MICHAEL DAVIS:  
William Blake  
A New Kind of Man  
180pp. Elek. £6.75.

There are two classic biographies of William Blake: the invaluable Gilchrist which, though first published as long ago as 1863, was updated by Ruthven Todd in 1942; and Mona Wilson's of 1927, the 1971 edition of which has been similarly augmented by Geoffrey Keynes. One of the questions thus arises as to what remains for a new biography, to which the answer seems to be that *William Blake: A New Kind of Man* is self-declared "concise". It is also surprisingly illustrated with pictures well-chosen and excellently reproduced, fifty-eight in black and white and eleven in full colour, and that does not include another two, one of each kind, on the jacket. To these illustrations I shall return.

The claim that Michael Davis's text is concise is true enough, though one cannot help wondering

creasing awareness of this fact in his novel worlds.

In a lecture in 1905, "The Question of Our Speech", James distinguished "the focus and shades of our language... the innumerable differentiated, discriminated units... that have, each, an identity, a quality, an outline, a shape, a clearness, a fineness, a sweetness, a richness, that have, in a word, a value". Dr Yeazell's acknowledgment of James's language, relying on a series of words hovering somewhere between critical terminology and metaphor, is too fluent to account for his precise, discriminating effect.

The language of Jamesian meditation dramatizes the compelling momentum with which the conscious mind once awakened, enlarges its domain; by a structural family, to articulate one perception is to call forth in turn a host of others.

if this is a merit as it has involved the rather arbitrary cutting down of many passages with which one has long been acquainted. Far more to be regretted, however, is that concision has decreed that the book shall have no notes of any kind, so that one can never be sure from what source a particular piece of information has been drawn; and this, having regard to the mountains of such new information as have been built up in recent years across the Atlantic by the industrious hands of David V. Erdman and G. E. Bentley Jr, is, from the scholarly point of view, a pity. I think this deficiency may best be illustrated by a couple of specific examples, each of them trivial. One of the earliest events in Blake's story concerns the occasion when the Society of Antiquaries reopened the tomb of Edward I in Westminster Abbey.

"... Blake, in his 'Mystical' Christ, 'that Blake and Emerson have assisted at the ceremony.' It is but natural, then, that we should note with some surprise among Mr Davis's illustrations a couple of drawings of the king in his coffin and described as 'a new kind of man'." There is, indeed, a case almost equally strong for calling him a very old kind of man; the Old Testament is full of such.

Years ago when Blake scholarship was young, one John Sampson did great service to Blake by establishing a good text of his poems; and this same Sampson did not disdain also to produce as a sideline some amusing and affectionate parodies of the Master's manner. That is not the spirit in which Mr Davis and the moderns approach Blake; and it is possible that, though Sampson may rather have overdone it, the pendulum has now swung too far the other way. Even *Swinnerton*, that ardent partisan of Blake, did not scruple to observe that some of the catalogues and genealogies in *Jerusalem* and elsewhere "seem at first invented only to strike an inachryse reader with furious or ludicrous lunacy".

Reverting to the illustrations, they call for nothing but praise (though I think Mr Davis should have mentioned that the bird-like face has long since been pulled down and "re-reinforced" since it was burnt out of the book). One of the most curious of Blake's pieces of needlework, done by Mrs Butts and representing a couple of hares, in the author's Blake's influence.

Another is a reproduction of the etching in Mrs Bray's *Life of Edward* which shows Stothard, Blake and Blake's friend Parker, as Mr Davis conjectures, imprisoned as suspected spies during a trip down the Medway—a picture for the inclusion of which in the Blake iconography I have long been clamouring. Mr Davis does not go so far as to decide which of the figures is Blake. My money is on the man in the black hat.

Mr Chesterton, who once lived near the Home for Lost Dogs in Battersea, has a whimsical tendency to let up a *Home for Lost Causes* in competition with Oxford University, in his half-explored blind alleys. Like the Home in Battersea, they are not popular with the lost ones; for that of the local chamber, the *Lost Causes* like their last offices well camouflaged. Mr Chesterton scorns concealment.

Not just competition or parody: a demonstration by Shaw that could meet Chesterton on his own stylistic terms, and go just that bit further. Not many of the reviewers in this volume were willing, or able, to do that.

A discussion of James's language needs more rigour and restraint, less reliance on long quotations speaking for themselves, and a clear statement about language itself.

Examining a more confined area—late Jamesian metaphor—Dr Yeazell demonstrates a thorough appreciation, quoting the Metaphysicals and *Middlemarch* make points about Maggie Verger. Discussing dialogue, she brings in Kate Crox's conversational powers. Finally, however, she asserts that readers of *The Golden Bowl* feel themselves "exiles in a world whose language is virtually untranslatable": bringing her thesis nearly round to its opening hypothesis. The question remains with *The Ivory Tower* only to break off in demonstrable untranslatability.

Dr Yeazell's account of James's development through the late novels is less disquieting than her subject; but her fluency will welcome to students familiar with James's works and glad of her poised among the critics.

ing, according to Gilchrist; at some thirty in the morning, according to Davis. I do not suggest for a moment that Mr Davis is wrong on either of these points; I do want to know whence his information comes.

There is one other blemish in this biography and that concerns what is admittedly a most difficult problem. Anyone who writes about Blake must of necessity tackle the Prophetic Books. I would, however, venture to suggest that the worst possible way in which to do this is to hold up the narrative flow by an inordinate deal of prose in the hands of his chief creator.

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## The distinctive voice of Massinger

By Anne Barton

PHILIP EDWARDS and COLIN GIBSON (Editors):  
The Plays and Poems of Philip Massinger  
Five volumes  
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £60 the set.

Philip Massinger died in 1640, fifteen years after his friend and collaborator John Fletcher. According to Aston Cockayne, who celebrated the curiosity in a poem, Massinger was buried in Fletcher's grave at St Dunstons Church, London. This interment proved oddly symbolic. At least thirteen plays in which Massinger was a secret but important player were to be printed in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio of 1647, without acknowledgment of his authorship. Moreover, as Fletcher's reputation gradually declined from his seventeenth-century height, it took Massinger's with it. Except for *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The City Madam*, comedies which stand apart from the rest of the canon, Massinger's very considerable body of dramatic work has all too readily been dismissed in the twentieth century as that of a ponderous and untalented imitator: a man who exploited Fletcher's dubious, tragicomic mode without being able to extract from it even the most limited and suspect theatrical virtues of which "decadence" was capable in the hands of his chief creator.

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is the play in which the related ideas of life as arrangement and as desire are most elaborately and perfectly combined.

Coleridge described Massinger as "a Democrat" and like him as an early Whig inconspicuously associated with Fletcher, the Tory ultra-Royalist. Since S. R. Gardiner devoted his attention, over a hundred years ago, to Massinger's politics, a good deal of notice has been taken of him as a critic of kings. It seems certain that Massinger did aim a few covert shafts at Charles I, and at royal policies to whose bountiful approval "Democrat" however, is obviously a misnomer. Ben Jonson might (in *The New Inn*) permit a chambermaid to marry a lord: Marullo in *The Bondman* turns out to be the Pastorella of his Salvage Man, to be of good birth. There is something inveterately puritan about Massinger, a bias which emerges not only in the social conservatism of his two city comedies, but in his essentially aristocratic ideal of rationalism and self-control. Yet his ingrained obsession with liberty—in particular, the freedom of the mind—greatly complicates this attitude.

Timoleon, to a large extent Massinger's spokesman in *The Bondman*, proclaims all men who "would usurp on others liberties, Rebels to nature, who are guilty of treasons blessings/All men by clayne as true legitimate sonnes". Slavery can be justified only as society's way of punishing confirmed vice. *The Bondman* itself is scarcely a Marxist manifesto. The leaders of the slaves' revolt is a disguised gentleman manipulating the lower classes for his own, essentially non-political, ends. He does not even respect his followers and with reason. Massinger insists that the slaves themselves are corrupt and greedy—just the sort of people who, according to Timoleon's definition, ought to be made to serve the virtuous because such service is a proper punishment for being so awful. (The possibility that what one is may be a depressing consequence of one's social condition was something that Massinger, along with virtually every other Shakespearean, was not prepared to entertain.) The Syracuse aristocracy, on the other hand, is not virtuous either.

To a large extent it deserves what it gets when the social order suddenly turns upside down. Marullo drives this point home in his impassioned explication to the aristocrats of how "your service" whole speech pleads for a return to an older way of life, one in which believed. It presents a nostalgic view of the good society, based upon a number of idealized Penelope dotted over a landscape. In such great houses, Marullo claims, Families And not imperious Masters; They used to be but slaves, regarded their humbler servants as "almost equal with their Sonnes".

The lady Cleora is the best of the aristocrats in *The Bondman*. She is honourable and by comparison with her playmates as Olympia and Corisca, considerably more. She loses the loss by arrogantly confiding men with beards. In just the way that Marullo and Timoleon deplore, what she decries as the "meaner quality" are apparently who "can endure more labour, plough the earth, and think they are rewarded, Brings home a fruitful Harvest to let them prove good Artificers, and set up for use and ornament, but not to touch at what is Noble."

Exactly this kind of haughtiness leads her, when her lover Leosthenes reads her a condescending lecture on chastity before he swans off to the wars, not only to resent his mistrust—which she is entirely right to do—but to blind herself by an absurd vow not to speak and to blindfold her eyes until his "the glorious splendor of my sufferings" is calculated to exalt her and humiliate Leosthenes, "the people loyning with you in the wonder". Events, however, take a different course. Again, Massinger is cautious. Cleora does not believe that Marullo, with whom she falls in love, is really a slave. Her father, brother and lover, on the other hand, do. Cleora has a bad allowance to exchange the tiresome Leosthenes for a man with whom it may be possible for her to be happy.

*The Bondman's* conjunction of the issue of political freedom with that of freedom within a love relationship is typical of Massinger. In both *The Maid of Honour* and *The Bashful Lover*, he women roundly informs a reigning prince that his mind and affections are out of his province, and involuntarily her own. Cleora is only one of a number of women in the plays who are torn between the jealousy and possessiveness of a lover and her husband determined to deprive them of their independence of being.

Storin, in *The Duke of Milan*, would prefer the wife on whom he does to be dead rather than to survive him. Mathias, in *The Picture*, is a Sicilian who has given him the slightest cause for suspicion, during his absence. Theodosius, in *The Emperor of the East*, moves from an extreme of uxoriousness to one of hate simply because his empress gives away a handsome upstart he sent her, without consulting him first. All of these men are against Massinger's ideal of marriage as a frank and reciprocal relationship based on mutual respect and trust. Their only form of self-worship.

Although no one would ascribe a Shakespearean depth of characterization to Massinger, his men and women are none the less living and real. Significantly, he seems to have preferred as central characters people past their first youth, men who are already married, almost all have a second wife, often secret, which is of consequence to the action. Massinger's insistence that man should be guided by reason, not by his passions, is a dictum hammered home in play after play. He never loses sight, however, of the fact that what is set down so in Heaven tends to be excruciatingly difficult to achieve on earth. It is not just that legal, political and social institutions inhibit man's freedom in ways that are bad as often as good, or that self-control is a difficult and demanding ideal.

The mind, forges fetters for itself. A character like Storin, a man, balanced, magnanimous and courageous, is orthodox enough, but one's wife. This self-imposed bondage makes him a prisoner of the irrational. Camilla, at the end of *The Maid of Honour*, after having done the right thing for the wrong reason, when she paid her ransom, compounds her mistake when she abandons the world for the religious life, in order to "deserve mens prayers, and woeber too." Overreach, as Hamlet recognized, cannot disengage his conscience from the landed aristocracy. It is ruin. Even the noble Charicla, whose self-restraint seems as impressive as his final play in the early scene of *The False Doctor*, and far superior to the hectoring of his well-meaning friend Romanus, loses his way in the pursuit of Honour. When he forces Rochfort,

the just judge, to condemn his own daughter to summary execution for adultery, arguing that "A Judge should feel no passions", he forgets that he himself was saved from perpetual imprisonment in Act I precisely because Rochfort did feel, and act upon, emotions which had nothing to do with the strict course of law. The whole play is a subtle examination of the vexed relation between personal and institutionalized justice.

I do not think that one can read through the seventeen plays collected in the Curzon Press edition without being impressed both by the force and singleness of his artistic personality, and by the range and variety of Massinger's output. Between such cheerful romps as *The Great Duke of Florence* or *The Renegado* (Massinger's *Entföhrendes aus dem Serail*), and the sombre splendours of *Believe As You List* and *The Roman Actor*, the distance is, in one sense, very great. Yet the same sensibility—thoughtful and essentially grave, though passionately and anxiously reflected in all of them, even as it is in the very different city comedies. There is a sense in which *The Roman Actor* is more pessimistic about the power of art to correct and inform its audience than any other play written between 1580 and 1642. Yet there was something in Massinger which refused to abandon the effort, while insisting that the game should not be played with marked cards. This is why he places his audience, too, at risk.

Coleridge's praise of Massinger's dramatic verse, excessive though it seems, is fundamentally accurate. Massinger never once needs to use metre, not even for low or comic scenes, because his flexible and beautifully cadenced

verse is accommodated to the requirements of the most ordinary conversation as perfectly as it is to impassioned speech. Magnificent lines such as Ford bestows upon his characters in their extremity—"So fully the standard of my prerogative in being a creature"—are not to be found in Massinger. On the other hand, he could give his audience the moving and truthful simplicity of Marcella's speech at the end of *The Duke of Milan*: "Oh, I have told my selfe/Am my grave", or the pulsing words of the former king Antiochus, now a galley-slave, as he calmly proves an identity that is no longer of any use to him by revealing to old friends the secret of a ring that once was his:

Antiochus: I will make a discoverie of a secret in it of wch you get are ignorant, pray for king Antiochus sake into my hands, you hinder els the facilitie of the cunninge of the lapidary. I can pull out the stone, & under it you shall finde my name, and cipher I then esde ingraven.

Cornelia: 'tis most apparent, though I love this knees shall pay their duty. Antiochus: By noe means. For your owne sake bee still incredulous since your faith cannot save mee. For all its deceptive simplicity,

consideration rejected it because he found it "a little too skillfully handled for Fane", a verdict with which Dr Strømmer agrees.

The play was evidently intended for performance, not for reading, although the over-ingenious complexity of the allegory suggests, to me at least, that the author was not a professional playwright but an eager amateur from the university, one of those described by professional men of the theatre, like James Shirley, as coming up to London "like market women with dozens full of lamentable tragedies and ridiculous comedies".

*Time's Distractions* (the name aptly bestowed on it by the editor) is neither comedy nor tragedy. It is a political tract disguised as a pastoral play. The scene is Arcadia (read England). Time arrives and expresses approval of its peaceful state, but misguidedly takes a nap. "Envy, Suspicion, Jealousy, and the 6 base more", so that he awakes full of venom and turns Arcadia into a scene of anarchy and broil.

The play is a striking example of the fashion for allegorical treatment of political themes which had already found expression in the masque both in England and abroad. There had been plays too the fashionable French dramatist Desmarest had glorified Richelieu's foreign policy in a five-act pastoral play about the nymph Europe, saved by the noble young shepherd Francion from molestation by an aggressive Spanish rival.

The text of *Time's Distractions* embodies familiar themes of Royalist argument and propaganda—an account of how the young prince, written about 1642-43, when the man was dead. Millicy Fane was a possibility, but the editor of his works, Clifford Leech, on

this is dramatic verse of a very high order. It is rhetorical in the best sense, the bones and sinews of shaggy action. Its qualities can be fully understood only if you speak it aloud. It is not easy to write about the essential skill, emotionally impoverished, Massinger's technical rigidity, announced boldly, during a crisis in the writing of English verse tragedy, that aspiring poets would do better to model themselves on Massinger than on Shakespeare, who may have tried. When Shelley fails to convince, in *The Cenci*, it is usually because he is remembering Shakespeare. His most effective lines, however, seem to spring from an entirely beneficial admiration of Massinger, as when Beatrice and her mother, in prison, bind up each other's hair before going to execution: "I flow o'ers/Have we done this for one another/Now we shall not do it any more."

It is curious, in a way, that Eliot should have attacked and condemned Massinger in the way he did. After all, the poetic style of this supposedly "dislocated" sensibility does not sound like that of a "speaking verse". At the same time, it contrives for much of the time to suggest what Eliot called "a deeper reality than that of the most of our conscious living". It seems, in many respects, to be the equivalent of that poetic medium for which Eliot himself was searching in the plays written after *Murder in the Cathedral*, medium which he equated to work to find. It does nothing else, the Clarendon edition should demonstrate the impossibility of putting Massinger (in Eliot's words) "finally and irrefutably into a place".

Dr Cooke and Professor Vincent grounded their interpretation of Westminster upon "its character as a highly specialized community, like the City or Whitehall, whose primary interest was inevitably its own very private institutional life". High politics has consequently required a highly specialized research programme. Anything that was said in public or appeared in print is prima facie suspect as "cant" or "rhetoric designed to mislead not to inform. The secrets of the archives, on the other hand, have regained an aura of mystique which seemed to have departed for ever with the passing of the older style of diplomatic history. It is a good rule of thumb that no self-respecting book on high politics will be based on fewer than fifty collections of private papers. Since these will be the papers of the only fifty men who counted, it follows that this is all it need be based upon.

A further corollary is also axiomatic. Little significance is to be attached to the role of ideas, especially when publicly expressed, and, worst of all, when widely disseminated. In studying high politics the cardinal error is to suppose that "principles" carry any independent weight as opposed to "expediency" which is the only true test of political rationality. It is taken for granted that rhetoric was merely used to disguise the real motives of politicians employed to project and resolve their private rivalries. The most scathing (and most frequent) charge which this school levels against other historians is that they are politically naïve; and it is rather a matter of pride to cover oneself against any imputation of naïveté by adopting a contemptuously hardened tone. When this is allied to a manner of writing which is heavily baroque, the result is a style which is not only tedious, but strikes some as the sort of cleverness which gives Cambridge a bad name.

In *The Liberal Mind, 1914-1929*, Michael Bentley acknowledges that his debt to Mr Cowling, whose pupil he was in 1986, was not without its effect. The epigraph of this work was

effect of doctrines imported from France, America and elsewhere. Synthesis is usually seen as consisting of a short-term, localized series of upheavals in industries with special problems of their own, a meteor which had already faded away long before 1914.

The turmoil that engulfed British industrial relations between 1910 and 1914 has long exercised compelling fascination for historians. G. D. H. Cole claimed in 1913 that the "unrest" of this period was quite unlike labour troubles in the past, since the workers now were rejecting not merely capitalism but their own unions and leaders, and the parliamentary method itself. Halden in 1923 could even write of "anarchy", in which the "revolt" of the workers and other groups foreshadowed the still greater violence of world war. These were indeed years when saw strikes and lock-outs of quite unusual length and ferocity—and at a time of relatively full employment. In addition, British labour does seem to have experienced at a new a revolutionary ideological thrust around 1910-12, one which challenged colonial bargaining, established union procedures, even the very authority of the state. It is this that has led to syndicalism, which its various sources for the League overtones, playing a central role in discussion of the labour troubles of the time. And yet, the extent and ideological coherence of British syndicalism—quite apart from the present reasons for its impact upon particular workers in specific industries—have seldom been examined in detail. Historians recently (perhaps in partial reaction to the liberal programme of the 1960s) have been anxious to "rehabilitate" the movement, to show it as a significant and enduring element in Britain, and to play down the

Titles recently added to the already extensive Regency Restoration Drama Series are *Thomas Oway's The Orphan* (18pp), edited by Aline Mackenzie Taylor, and *Thomas Southerne's Oroonoko* (143pp), edited by Maximilian E. Novak and David Stuart Roddy. *Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's A Fair Quarrel* (138pp), edited by George R. Price, has just appeared in the companion series covering Renaissance drama. The texts in both series, which are published by Edward Arnold, have been based on fresh collections of early editions. Each volume has a critical introduction, a chronology juxtaposing political and literary events, with events in the author's life. The volumes are £8 each (paperback, £3.95).

## Expediency in high places

By Peter Clarke

MICHAEL BENTLEY:

*The Liberal Mind 1914-1929*  
279pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£9.50.

Ten years ago Maurice Cowling published his extremely able study *1867: Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution*, which can fairly be taken as the inauguration of a particular school of writing about British political history. The term "high politics" is its hallmark. The study of high politics is based upon certain assumptions which are introduced in the introduction to a later book, *The Impact of Labour* (1971). "Issues of substance", he explained, "except about the party system, will be considered so far as solutions, or failure to provide solutions, affected the functioning of the government or politicians concerned." The political system was taken as consisting of a group of fifty or sixty politicians reaching to one another at Westminster. High politics, so the argument ran, was primarily a matter of rhetoric and manoeuvre.

In the hands of its practitioners this approach has yielded some remarkable studies, chiefly concerned with short periods—months rather than years—of political crisis. Mr Cowling's version of 1867 with the Second Reform Act left out the *four de force*. Its methodology allowed him to develop new insights about the importance of tactical considerations and personal rivalries; and readers were fortunate in having other books available which dealt with the original content, scope, reception and effect of the legislation. There inevitably followed an account (by Andrew Jones) of 1884 with the Third Reform Act left out. But the most challenging of the books, one that raised highest expectations, was *The Governing Passion* (1974) by A. B. Cooke and John Vincent, which may likewise be described as 1886 with its Liberalism left out. The epigraph of this work was

borrowed from Evelyn Waugh's *After the Eagle*. "In a democracy, man do not seek authority so that they may impose a policy. They seek a policy so that they may achieve authority."

Dr Cooke and Professor Vincent grounded their interpretation of Westminster upon "its character as a highly specialized community, like the City or Whitehall, whose primary interest was inevitably its own very private institutional life". High politics has consequently required a highly specialized research programme. Anything that was said in public or appeared in print is prima facie suspect as "cant" or "rhetoric designed to mislead not to inform. The secrets of the archives, on the other hand, have regained an aura of mystique which seemed to have departed for ever with the passing of the older style of diplomatic history. It is a good rule of thumb that no self-respecting book on high politics will be based on fewer than fifty collections of private papers. Since these will be the papers of the only fifty men who counted, it follows that this is all it need be based upon.

A further corollary is also axiomatic. Little significance is to be attached to the role of ideas, especially when publicly expressed, and, worst of all, when widely disseminated. In studying high politics the cardinal error is to suppose that "principles" carry any independent weight as opposed to "expediency" which is the only true test of political rationality. It is taken for granted that rhetoric was merely used to disguise the real motives of politicians employed to project and resolve their private rivalries. The most scathing (and most frequent) charge which this school levels against other historians is that they are politically naïve; and it is rather a matter of pride to cover oneself against any imputation of naïveté by adopting a contemptuously hardened tone. When this is allied to a manner of writing which is heavily baroque, the result is a style which is not only tedious, but strikes some as the sort of cleverness which gives Cambridge a bad name.

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effect of doctrines imported from France, America and elsewhere. Synthesis is usually seen as consisting of a short-term, localized series of upheavals in industries with special problems of their own, a meteor which had already faded away long before 1914. The turmoil that engulfed British industrial relations between 1910 and 1914 has long exercised compelling fascination for historians. G. D. H. Cole claimed in 1913 that the "unrest" of this period was quite unlike labour troubles in the past, since the workers now were rejecting not merely capitalism but their own unions and leaders, and the parliamentary method itself. Halden in 1923 could even write of "anarchy", in which the "revolt" of the workers and other groups foreshadowed the still greater violence of world war. These were indeed years when saw strikes and lock-outs of quite unusual length and ferocity—and at a time of relatively full employment. In addition, British labour does seem to have experienced at a new a revolutionary ideological thrust around 1910-12, one which challenged colonial bargaining, established union procedures, even the very authority of the state. It is this that has led to syndicalism, which its various sources for the League overtones, playing a central role in discussion of the labour troubles of the time. And yet, the extent and ideological coherence of British syndicalism—quite apart from the present reasons for its impact upon particular workers in specific industries—have seldom been examined in detail. Historians recently (perhaps in partial reaction to the liberal programme of the 1960s) have been anxious to "rehabilitate" the movement, to show it as a significant and enduring element in Britain, and to play down the

effect of doctrines imported from France, America and elsewhere. Synthesis is usually seen as consisting of a short-term, localized series of upheavals in industries with special problems of their own, a meteor which had already faded away long before 1914.

The roots of syndicalist ideas in Britain prior to 1910 are clear enough. For years, dissatisfaction with the cumbersome procedures of trade union bargaining had been building up; so had discontent with the fruits of Labour's election victories in 1906. The fall in real wages during the Edwardian era added force to demands for a new industrial strategy, based on the rank-and-file workers rather than on reformist and bureaucratic union officials. This would either create "dual" unions or else, more usually transform the existing unions from below, so that economic power could be seized directly by workers on the shop floor or at the coal face. However, it was the return to Australia in 1910, which challenged colonial bargaining, established union procedures, even the very authority of the state. It is this that has led to syndicalism, which its various sources for the League overtones, playing a central role in discussion of the labour troubles of the time. And yet, the extent and ideological coherence of British syndicalism—quite apart from the present reasons for its impact upon particular workers in specific industries—have seldom been examined in detail. Historians recently (perhaps in partial reaction to the liberal programme of the 1960s) have been anxious to "rehabilitate" the movement, to show it as a significant and enduring element in Britain, and to play down the

workers' movement in South Wales above all) and transport workers in the docks and on the railways. Each had their own venge difficulties, each their own brand of atomization which made the liberal programme of the 1960s seem especially attractive. In the years 1910-12 there followed, in rapid succession, the Cambrian collieries' stoppage in the Rhondda, and ultimately a

## Stirrings on the shop floor

By Kenneth O. Morgan

MOB HOLTON:

*British Syndicalism 1900-1914*  
Myths and Realities  
232pp. Pluto Press. £2.95.

The turmoil that engulfed British industrial relations between 1910 and 1914 has long exercised compelling fascination for historians. G. D. H. Cole claimed in 1913 that the "unrest" of this period was quite unlike labour troubles in the past, since the workers now were rejecting not merely capitalism but their own unions and leaders, and the parliamentary method itself. Halden in 1923 could even write of "anarchy", in which the "revolt" of the workers and other groups foreshadowed the still greater violence of world war. These were indeed years when saw strikes and lock-outs of quite unusual length and ferocity—and at a time of relatively full employment. In addition, British labour does seem to have experienced at a new a revolutionary ideological thrust around 1910-12, one which challenged colonial bargaining, established union procedures, even the very authority of the state. It is this that has led to syndicalism, which its various sources for the League overtones, playing a central role in discussion of the labour troubles of the time. And yet, the extent and ideological coherence of British syndicalism—quite apart from the present reasons for its impact upon particular workers in specific industries—have seldom been examined in detail. Historians recently (perhaps in partial reaction to the liberal programme of the 1960s) have been anxious to "rehabilitate" the movement, to show it as a significant and enduring element in Britain, and to play down the

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national miners strike for a minimum wage in April 1912, a railway strike; and two successive docks strikes in 1911 and 1912, most effective in London and Merseyside. These were the years of the Tynes' penny riots, of the shooting of strikers in Llanelli in 1911, of the violent strike directed against Cornish clay workers, of Don't Shoot Killing No Murder, of Sen Tillet on Tower Hill calling on the Almighty to strike Lord Devonport dead. Violence, as American as cherry pie, now seemed to be as British as Welsh rarebit.

But after this the wave of explosive militancy in established industries burnt itself out, the result of exhaustion and repression. In the second, less spectacular, phase of industrial action in 1913-14, attention now turned to workers elsewhere, suffering from the impact of rapid technological change upon craft employment, above all the craftsmen and semi-skilled men among the engineers and building workers, through their strikes ended in defeat (as did the Irish transport workers' campaign associated with Jim Larkin), the effects of syndicalism continued to reverberate throughout the labour world in the wartime period and beyond. There were echoes of it in 1926. However transient, a new strategy and programme for the overthrow of British capitalism had been projected, with Mann, Larkin, Bowman and Abert as its variegated spokesmen. It advanced an original and radical programme, which rejected the bureaucratic shackles of the corporate state. It emerged, most movingly, in the libertarian vision of industrial democracy outlined in 1912 (significantly in Biblical tones) by Abert, Hay, Mann, Bowman and their colleagues in *The Miners' Next Step*—a vision of a new social order in which "man-kind shall at last have leisure and inclination to really live as men and not as the beasts which perish."

Mr Holtan's account sheds important light both on the ideas and the organization of the syndicalists. Understandably, he finds difficulty in distinguishing the syndicalists from the socialists of the industrial unionism, on the model of the American Wobblies. His concept of "proto-syndicalism" proves somewhat elusive. While he admits that the main impact of revolt passed away after 1912, he

characteristic strengths of the school to which it should be assigned. The author has shown diligence and enterprise in combining the available archival resources and he presents his findings with a rigour which only occasionally degenerates into fierceness. The subject, however, is something of a scholarship. For one thing, it spans a period of fifteen years; and for another the title suggests a concern with thought rather than action. The book purports to be a new refined view of what is to be regarded as problematic, though admittedly without achieving complete success in resolving the questions it raises. In short, it is not just a chip off the old block; it is an object lesson in high politics and how to cure it.

Dr Bentley announces at the outset that the history of the Liberal mind is not the history of an ideology. It is the outcome of an interconnection between world and thought-world and it is to be discerned as much in practice as in theory. This seems an unhelpful way of putting it, in that the modes in which a system of thought is influenced by its social context are, on most definitions, precisely what constitute the ideological element. It is unprofitable to quibble about words, but the author might have made his meaning clearer instead of claiming that the Liberals' view of their past was "personal or organizational before it was ideological". He had instead laid emphasis on the extent to which it was ideologically functional in a particular context, rather than abstractly doctrinaire. For his central precept is that Liberal doctrine was "created in parallel with, or even in the train of, ongoing parliamentary activity". The context, to be sure, is specified in these rather narrow political terms, but even so the dialectical approach is welcome. What is almost entirely left out of this book is the formal content of Liberal thought in the period which it deals. If the author had given this more attention, and related it to its context, the world perhaps have been better placed to glimpse its ideological role.

As it is, Dr Bentley treats us to a string of intelligent and perceptive observations on the Liberal mind, at the expense of overlooking the text

itself. As might be expected, this tendency to ignore substantive issues is more apparent in the first part of the book on "leadership", where the canons of high politics are followed most closely. For example, there is a discussion of the way in which Lloyd George established an ascendancy over Asquith during 1918 with no reference to the dramatically changing fortunes of the war; and this is followed by an examination of the dilemmas of the Liberal supporters of Lloyd George between 1919 and 1922 with no mention of his Government's policy in Ireland. This sort of omission is not to be explained by negligence or oversight. It is a natural consequence of the methodology adopted, which postulates that political manoeuvre can be comprehended as an autonomous activity.

There is, however, another aspect of the book which becomes prominent in the second part, and this involves turning to doctrine. For Mr Bentley's account of the crucial element in the complex, Dr Bentley has an arresting and in many ways a persuasive theme to develop here. He claims that the split in the Liberal party, which came to pass when Lloyd George replaced Asquith as Prime Minister in December 1916, revealed an intellectual gulf as well as a personal rivalry between the two sections. Asquith and Lloyd George became symbols of irreconcilable ways of looking at the world, which when confronted with the crisis of the war, the Lloyd Georgians were empirical-minded men who became identified with "the secular and the flexible and the expedient". The Asquithians adopted a quasi-religious view of their commitment to principle and "degenerated into an acidulated church". The argument of the book is that the development of the Liberal mind, with its obsessive regard for principle, nurtured on grudges and accented by adversity, was a fatal obstacle to the adoption of a viable strategy for the party. It ruled out too many options and made effective reunion impossible.

This account certainly aids an understanding of the Asquithian mentality, but whether as a cause of the party's decline, or as a result of its decline, it is more open to question.

Dr Bentley has gone some way down this road and lays claim in his final chapter to have gone further than is apparent from an actual reading of the rest of the book. The context in which the mind operated was often as important as the content of the mind itself, he writes; and put in this way the book would seem to disagree. This unfavourable criticism, however, like this can demonstrate the relevance of private circumstances and can yield insights into psychology in a way which would not otherwise be possible. Indeed, though on the whole rarely, there are significant inconsistencies and incongruities between the public posture and the private face. But such references would surely be put to better use in adding to the intellectual dimension to the formal professions rather than, as here, standing in substitution for them.

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Mr Holtan's account sheds important light both on the ideas and the organization of the syndicalists. Understandably, he finds difficulty in distinguishing the syndicalists from the socialists of the industrial unionism, on the model of the American Wobblies. His concept of "proto-syndicalism" proves somewhat elusive. While he admits that the main impact of revolt passed away after 1912, he

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Dr Bentley makes the shrewd point that Asquith was a man who, in what became his distinctive position in order to rationalize his inadequacies as a war leader. Perhaps it is more widely true that the characteristic Liberal outlook of the post-war years was a consequence of decline and a means of reconciling oneself to defeat. The Liberals became a party of survivors, consoling each other with memories of happier days. When Dr Bentley writes of the "diminution of Liberal change after 1914 which took its character from the process of old men becoming older and old ideas deepening in their familiarity", he is touching deftly upon the pathology of a dying party. The claim he himself advances is the more sweeping one that the dead lion of the past was the root of the trouble. "The Liberal was too much Liberalism preached over too long a period to men with too much to remember."

The importance which Liberals attached to principle is thus the crux of Dr Bentley's interpretation; but what they understood by principle does not interest him. Not for him "a state position of the difficulties raised by Defence of the Realm Acts, the Paris Resolutions and conscription". What any of these issues were ostensibly about can be safely ignored in the confidence that this can hardly have been what they were really about. "Printed material," he explains, as one point, "does little to help since it is so often at pains to pretend that faction amounts to something else."

Printed material certainly does little to sustain his very full range of references. Indeed, it occasionally seems as if a published item only gains credence if a copy of it can be noted as resting in a private archive. What Hobbhouse wrote to C. P. Scott, what Keynes wrote to Margot Asquith—here, rather than in any published work, where the Liberal mind must allegedly be sought. The author is to be congratulated on tapping some valuable sources. The diary of MacLellan Scott is put in particular good use. Manuscript sources like this can demonstrate the relevance of private circumstances and can yield insights into psychology in a way which would not otherwise be possible. Indeed, though on the whole rarely, there are significant inconsistencies and incongruities between the public posture and the private face. But such references would surely be put to better use in adding to the intellectual dimension to the formal professions rather than, as here, standing in substitution for them.

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# Homeland, my Homeland

By Christopher R. Hill

**PATRICK LAURENCE:**  
The Transkei  
Johannesburg: Ravan Press. R4.  
**KAIZER D. MATANZIMA:**  
Independence My Way  
136pp. Pretoria: Foreign Affairs  
Association. R8.

**BEN TEMKIN:**  
Gutha Buthelesi: Zulu Statesman  
413pp. Purnell. R12.50.

Now that the Transkei has been granted independence (though that status has been recognised only by South Africa), we may expect continuing interest in its progress, and in the Homelands policy in general. (The Homelands or Bantustans, as they used to be nicknamed, are areas based on the old Reserves, in which, according to the theory of apartheid, every African in South Africa will eventually have citizenship.) Two of these books deal specifically with the Transkei, and the third is a life of Chief Gutha Buthelesi, Chief Executive Councilor of the KwaZulu (Zulu) Homeland.

Patrick Laurence, who is a distinguished journalist of the *South African Daily Mail*, has given us a thorough up-to-the-minute, well-researched short book in *The Transkei*, in which the only real fault is that he has devoted slightly too much of his space to retelling well-known history. However, this is a problem faced by any author writing for a general audience rather than for the specialist. He has also relied rather too much on secondary sources, even when primary material, such as the *Transkei Herald*, is readily available and like all South Africans writing for a South African audience—he has had to be careful not to quote authorities on the government's "banned" list.

Laurence gives a valuable account of the Transkei's politics since limited self-government was achieved in 1963. He traces the development of the Transkei from the early days of its formation during that period, a matter of some importance since Matanzima was chief minister from 1963-1976 and is now prime minister. He shows how Matanzima's Transkei National Party had become a powerful force, and the opposition correspondingly collapsed, even before the recent declaration of some measure of self-government, and even before the fact that one of the chief ministers in the Assembly supported but also in his insistence on genuinely popular issues, such as more land for the Transkei.

Matanzima has moved away from his early doctrinaire devotion to apartheid, which he saw as the only way to protect Xhosa nationalism, and will now accept a black-white accept-non-black as citizens. All this Laurence traces back to Matanzima's growing conviction of the necessity for foreign investment. He shows also that the South African government was willing to accept a degree of non-recognition of this Transkei independence, though it has been made clear that any white South African who becomes a citizen of the Transkei will forfeit his South African citizenship.

Despite Matanzima's apparent success, Laurence shows that he failed in the pre-independence negotiations on the two great issues of land and citizenship. (It is true that some land, Port St John's and the districts of Glen St John's and Hosiab, were transferred to the Transkei, but this was far less than Matanzima was claiming.) On the crucial issue of citizenship, Matanzima argued for people of Transkeian origin living in the rest of South Africa, Transkeian citizenship should be a matter of choice. As it has turned out, they have no choice: their South African citizenship has been withdrawn so that if the Transkei is to be a separate state, they may become stateless. This failure, Laurence argues, has contributed more than any other factor to the worldwide non-recognition of the Transkei.

Nevertheless, as Laurence says, Matanzima has earned a place in South African history. His 413-

page book, *Independence My Way* (exorbitantly priced at R8 for 138 pages), is disappointing, since it consists largely of excerpts from speeches and even includes a long description of the Transkei as an official of the South African Department of Information. Nevertheless, there are some interesting passages (which if they were originally spoken into a tape recorder) and some nice insights. For example: "I moved about among my subjects on horseback for eighteen years, so I managed to know them intimately, and they also knew me intimately. But now I travel by car and they don't see so much of me." Most of the main themes in Matanzima's thoughts are at least touched upon and the book contains much raw material for future biographers.

Ben Temkin, another journalist, has written a long biography (at 413 pages it is too long) of Chief Buthelesi. It is confusingly arranged, particularly the second half, which deals with the period since the inauguration of the KwaZulu legislative assembly in 1972, in which arrangement by theme, rather than chronologically, leads to repetition and produces uncertainty in the reader's mind as to where exactly he is. It is not clear why such a book was needed; a more considered work might have served its purpose better. It is disquieting, too, that Temkin should say, when thanking his informants, "not all these people realised that they were being interviewed." One can only hope that this will not make research more difficult in future.

Firm editorial advice could have overcome the weaknesses in *Gutha Buthelesi*. On the credit side, Temkin shows that Buthelesi is a major figure in South African politics, ultimately far more important than he may turn out to be. He is a leader who can maintain fruitful contact with the banned ANC (and perhaps the PAC as well), unite

## The continental case

By James Mayall

**MOSÉS E. ALKAN:**  
African Goals and Diplomatic Strategies in the United Nations  
165pp. North Quincy, Mass.: The Christopher Publishing House. \$9.95.

**BERNARDYUN ANDEMICAE:**  
The OAU and the UN  
331pp. Holmes and Meier, for UNITAR. \$14.

Between the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity in May 1963 and the Portuguese coup in April 1974, the African diplomacy was remarkably stable in sharp contrast with the course of events within many African states, their foreign policies were fairly predictable. Within the OAU there was a concerted effort to construct peacekeeping machinery and techniques which would amount to things, limit external intervention in African affairs. Externally, the African states applied unrelenting pressure on the Western powers to end the African colonialism. What was the African position on the United Nations to force the white minority regimes in southern Africa to relinquish control. From different perspectives, these two books deal with the evolution of this "dual strategy" and assess its prospects of success.

Drawing heavily on speeches by African representatives at the UN or resolutions sent on an editorially rather narrow selection of African newspapers, Mosés Alkan has constructed a clear, readable and commendably short account of the African attempt to obtain a diplomatic status "their lack of national power" prevented them from achieving independence. What was remarkable about this effort was the high degree of unanimity achieved in pressing African demands. No matter what issues were dividing them within Africa, at the UN they spoke with one voice. Dr Alkan is always careful to tell us who is speaking, the speeches themselves are virtually interchangeable. In an analysis of African politics on Rhodesia and racial discrimination he exposes the common pattern: in each case as the Africans have progressively escalated their demands, the white powers have responded with a more overwhelming approach, which the Africans are

urban and rural Africans, and even gain the confidence of some whites, especially those who, in Temkin's words, are "mostly English speaking [and] see themselves as a second-class citizens in a country where blacks are third-class citizens."

Buthelesi has shown extraordinary political skill ever since the time when, urged to persuade his tribe to accept the introduction of Bantu Authorities (which underlie the whole Homeland system), he refused that normally citizens do not choose to accept legislation: they simply obey it. So when the government eventually lost patience and said that acceptance was no longer a matter of choice, Buthelesi was able to thank it for releasing him from perplexity. "In [my] doing so [ie accepting Bantu Authorities], no one will doubt that I was carrying out my duties as a member of a subject race regardless of whatever feelings I may have of the particular legislation."

Buthelesi has chosen, by operating within the apartheid system, to gain every last inch of advancement for black Africans. He is unequivocally opposed to violence and in favour of foreign investment in South Africa, two views which have earned him the epithet "stomach" in some quarters. On the other hand his speeches, which have become increasingly forthright in recent years, make it clear that, unlike Matanzima, he has never approved of apartheid, and condemns the acceptance of independence by the Transkei or any other Homeland. Indeed, it is through his criticism of apartheid that he seeks to make *Inkatha*, George Zulu cultural movement, into what Temkin calls "a cultural liberation movement for all blacks in South Africa". Like Matanzima, though for very different reasons, he is assured of a place in the political history of South Africa.

support of the General Assembly only to have their resolutions blocked by the Western powers in the Security Council. This is not a secret, with which it is possible to disagree, but it is a fact. Dr Alkan has successfully captured the flavour of the African campaign. He is less successful when he deals with African expectations of the United Nations. It is clear that in the early 1960s African states joined the Organisation to solve African problems. Hence, for example, the pressure for sanctions against South Africa and Portugal under Chapter 7 of the Charter but that later, in the face of Western opposition, they were more concerned with using the United Nations to legitimise the policy of containment of the white South. Dr Alkan documents the two types of policy, but has relatively little to say about the shift from one to the other, or its implications for the functioning of the United Nations. It really cannot be the case, as he suggests, that as recently as 1974, the African states expected the General Assembly resolution expelling South Africa to resolve the Apartheid Question. That was not, one imagines, the object of the exercise.

By contrast, Bernardy Anemic's study of the OAU and the UN, which was written for UNITAR, is as much concerned with the implications of Africa's "dual strategy" for the operational efficiency of both organizations as with the policies themselves. The book is arranged in two sections, the first of which deals with peace and security and the second primarily with the problems of cooperation for Africa and the OAU. It was in the former area that the problem of UN/OAU relations first arose. After the Congo crisis African governments were less willing than previously to refer inter-African disputes to the UN. As Anemic argues, this was one of the main reasons for setting up the OAU in the first place, and as the major powers were at that time anxious to avoid open confrontation with African governments, they were able to evolve a set of principles for handling inter-African disputes. It is rightly contended that two of these "diplomatic norms" have been of particular importance in inter-African relations. The first is what he calls the "OAU first" approach, which the Africans are

couraged by the United Nations Secretary General to follow as a practical procedure "without in any way suggesting exclusive jurisdiction for the OAU". Although the right of individual states to refer their complaints to the United Nations has not been ruled out, in practice they have been constrained from doing so. The second norm was "the application of the principle of *uti possidetis* as regards the boundaries existing at the time of independence." Taken together these two principles have had a stabilizing effect on African diplomacy; but they also illustrate another general point about the OAU, which he is less in sympathy with, namely the preference of African governments for "deliberative intervention rather than direct mediation" in their relations with other states.

It is at this point that Anemic's approach seems most open to question. While his analysis does commendably demonstrate the supremacy of the United Nations, national organization, his proposals for the treatment of substantive issues in African conflict and for preventive diplomacy, while persuasive in their own terms, implicitly assume that both the OAU and the United Nations have a life of their own. But if the OAU lacked the jurisdiction to act effectively in the Nigerian civil war, what chances are there that in similar cases in the future "the OAU and the United Nations might attempt to neutralize the conflict and non-African states to deny any political or military assistance to both sides"? For a scheme to work the member states would have to endorse the precedence of conflict management over all other political, economic and ideological considerations. Even the "try the OAU first" principle was historically contingent: it was developed with the support of all the major powers including the Soviet Union. Whether it will be able to survive the setback of the Angolan civil war, where the Soviet Union itself breached the principle while the OAU watched, remains to be seen. But while there is room for argument over whether development, Anemic's analysis of the story so far is both thorough and convincing. This is an excellent book which will be indispensable for anyone wishing to understand the relationship between the two organizations.

By Shirley Ardener

**NANCY J. HARKIN and EDNA G. BRAY (Editors):**  
Women in Africa  
Studies in Social and Economic Change  
306pp. Stanford University Press. \$15.

*Women in Africa*, like some other recent work in various fields, attempts to redress the bias which in the past has placed undue emphasis on the activities and interests of men. While not particularly novel in intention, or offering especially startling theoretical speculations, it is nevertheless welcome for some of its curious studies on African women. The common theme is the way African women have experienced and contributed towards social change.

Nancy Harkin and Edna Bray, the American editors, introduce the work of nine women and two men. We are reminded again that much past research has been conducted on male informants, resulting in a rather skewed view of women. There has been a concentration, the editors conclude, on African women as wives, mothers and lovers, to the detriment of their social, economic and political roles.

The first study is of a group of women who, happily, were able to turn the situation in Africa and Europe to their advantage. George Brooks discusses the rise of those women entrepreneurs of Eurafrican or slave descent known as *Signares* who flourished in Senegal in the eighteenth century. They formed a valuable, enduring element in trade relations between the transient

foreign merchants, with whom they were allied, and local businessmen. They had teams of slaves and artisans at their disposal and in demand for their special knowledge and wide economic and political connections.

There are two papers about the Igbo of Nigeria. Kamene Okoro shows how the traditional role of women in what she calls the "dual sex" organization of the western Igbo has been underestimated. Women had their own political offices, with clearly defined economic and social functions. Colonial rule, Christianity, health clinics, and the introduction of price-fixed foodstuffs all led to a diminution of the power of the female establishment. Since independence there has been a move to reassert the traditional female institutions in the villages, but there remains the role in native institutions where the "single-sex" system of the colonial period has been influential.

Judith Van Allen considers the well-documented Igbo women who, in 1929, took part in what was significantly termed the "Abu Riyo" by male reporters of a colonial government, and as "Women's War" by the women involved. She too is at pains to gain full recognition to the former political influence of Igbo women who were able to organize themselves and when outraged would even come out on strike. She states, however, that even where they were given formal rights of access to political discussion they were less likely to speak than they were men.

Margaret Hay's study illustrates the effect of change brought about both by climate and by the advent of colonialism upon the division of labour between the sexes. Luo women are depicted as innovators who were able to maintain food production through their adoption of new crops and labour-saving techniques, despite the withdrawal of male labour from the rural sector and the pressures for a money economy to meet tax and other commitments.

Two papers examine the repercussions of changing attitudes to cooperation and individualism in economic affairs. Barbara Lewis is interested in the different ways in which groups among the nomadic women of Abidjan utilize credit institutions. Claire Robertson discusses the traditional family system of the Gambia through which clusters of female relatives were able to run large business enterprises. She shows how the women have lost their independence and are now less qualified to make a success of that independence.

The political traditions of the Gambia are discussed in terms of equality and asymmetry by Leith Mullins, and again we read of the relative weakening of females in the modern system. She gives an optimistic account of the improvements being introduced by the new ruling governments of Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Angola. Stories in this book of how some well-intentioned innovations have led to disasters (such as James Beckett's account of the ham-fisted implementation of some new settlement schemes in Tanzania) must, however, temper any such expectations.

The part played by women in spiritual affairs has not been forgotten. Iris Berger shows that female cults among the Nyamwezi of East Africa occupied a central place in religious affairs, and not the "peripheral" position suggested by vigorous public activities of the Muslim women of Mombasa by the great Arab and balance of the preceding picture commonly associated with Muslim women. From the other side of Africa, Filomena Steady shows how important Protestantism has been to the identity of the Creole women of Sierra Leone. She correctly dismisses the view that this religion should be regarded as merely an imported adjunct, for it has long been embedded in Creole culture and made its own.

Eleven papers cannot be given adequate critical discussion here. They combine to make a book which offers a variety of readable material, being generally free from specialist vocabulary and polemical tone. It can be recommended to anyone curious about the lives of African women.

## Philosophy and pedagogy

By Michael Brock

**R. S. PETERS:**  
Education and the Education of Teachers  
195pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £4.95.

"The aim," writes R. S. Peters, "of the new International Library of the Philosophy of Education is to build up a body of fundamental work... which is both practically relevant and philosophically competent." This volume contains six of his papers on educational problems and four on the education of teachers. Three of them have already been published in journals and three in book form. The first appeared in 1964. Together they "represent the author's developing thought." Professor Peters has long been a pre-eminent philosopher in his field. More than three quarters of the references supplied in this book are to works which he has written or edited. Until he made his mark in the educational theory taught to intending teachers was, in his own phrase, "undifferentiated mush". He now charts recent progress and some of the reefs ahead.

All of these were important papers and most were first published in the *Journal of Education*. Stylistic skills apart, it is slightly disconcerting, when reading page seven of the second essay, to encounter the note: "This paper was written before the author's second thoughts on the concept of 'education' as set out in the first paper. Hence the discrepancies between them." He is no longer happy even with his second thoughts and is attempting to work out a further revision. The fourth essay, "Dilemmas in Liberal Education," repeats some of the third, "Ambiguities." Moreover it is not only Professor Peters' thought which has been developing in twelve years. The last essay, "The Role and Responsibilities of the University in Teacher Education," appeared in 1972, soon after a leak suggesting that the James Committee wished to lessen this role.

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## The policeman's load

By T. A. Critchley

**ROY LEWIS:**  
A Force For The Future  
316pp. Temple Smith. £7.50.

As recently as the late 1960s anyone cautiously predicting a "crisis of police" would have been regarded as a madman. Our police were still able to preserve order and limit the growth of crime in a manner that many other countries (we liked to think) might envy. It is a measure of our national decline that now, the very thing that belief must be seriously questioned; and any book based on an acute awareness of the changes in society, combined with the author's obvious sympathy for the police, is to that extent to be welcomed.

"The evolution of an unarmed force," writes Roy Lewis, "was made possible by the prosperity, optimism and morality of Victorian Britain." His skilled assemblage of contemporary sources leaves the reader in no doubt that the police today face immense and growing problems, but his analysis of the proper response to these problems gives rise to some misgivings. His partly in the author's selection of source material, and partly in his evident unfamiliarity, at all events until recently, with a very complex subject.

There are three main sources on which a study of the police may be founded: first, current newspapers and journals, supplemented by talks with policemen; second, official publications such as the annual reports of the Chief Inspector of Constabulary and the Metropolitan Commissioner; together with the annual reports of Chief Constables; and third, the material that a serious researcher would glean from the Association of Chief Police Officers, the "Association of

Only the most dedicated historian needs to be reminded of how things looked before oil prices rocketed and the birth-rates of states as plentiful as the colleges of education "are to be relegated to a kind of secondary modern area of higher education and given an inferior type of degree." Professor Peters wrote angrily, "this downgrading of the [teaching] profession will obviously have an immediate effect on recruitment." Yet in the event some colleges preferred CNA degrees to those of universities. If this "downgrading" were all that depressed teacher recruitment nowadays how happy we would be.

The loose ends in a conference paper which stimulate discussion look less well in a book. In higher education, Professor Peters writes, arguments could, of course, be mounted for showing why, whatever is done about Egyptology, the lot of teaching must be spent on engineering. Any community must hand on the knowledge and skills necessary to earn a living. What level of material achievement is necessary for this is difficult to say. There is, however, too much overplaying of the economist's hand in this sphere—witness ancient Athens and the modern kibbutzim.

Neither of these last examples seems particularly relevant to what Professor Peters calls "our society's... greed to consumption" (whether in London or Tel Aviv). Governments, like economists, receive brief treatment in these pages. They see education "mainly as the source of trained manpower." There is no hint that a politician might be influenced by voters wanting their children to go to college, or even by the National Union of Teachers.

In "The Justification of Education" Professor Peters stresses how limiting an instrumental attitude can be. "What kind of case, in terms of providing services," he asks, "can be made for... shop stewards being... alive to their historical situation?" A good case could, perhaps, be made, even in the case of the shop steward, in a specific context of adult education the question seems odd. Who knows which fifteen-year-old is going to become a shop steward? Was Plato nearly right about Education?

"... exemplifies the dangers of the discussion paper technique in a high degree. The argument that Plato's educational theories were very sound, and anticipated 'much of Piaget', but were vitiated by an over-geometrical conception of reason. Though the latter criticism follows those of Popper, Fite and Weldon, Professor Peters is very interesting on the merits of the Platonic system, and on its fatal flaw. Yet the account is not quite convincing."

Plato, we are told, was "what is often now called a perfectionist, in that he thought that if you can get men in their early childhood, then, given their potential, and given the correct form of social influence, you can produce people like Gandhi or Sir Stafford Cripps." He was not good at estimating the incidence of high potential. "He believed that basically most men were moral." This is merely a "minor" derivative point, however. It "might be refuted by appealing to a normal distribution curve of human abilities." If this version of Plato's position were fair it is hard to see why anyone should bother with his educational theories. We should surely have dismissed a pundit who combined an extreme concentration on children of high potential with a gross underestimation of their numbers as a proportion of the whole (not to mention virtual silence on the fact that he should be spotted when young). Professor Peters has highlighted his "major objection to Plato" at the cost of distorting the Platonic system. He presents it as a confused and ineffective elitism, and not as a sound and fascinating utopia in which the breeding methods, maintained by rigged ballots, ensure the excellence and ascendancy of the Guardians.

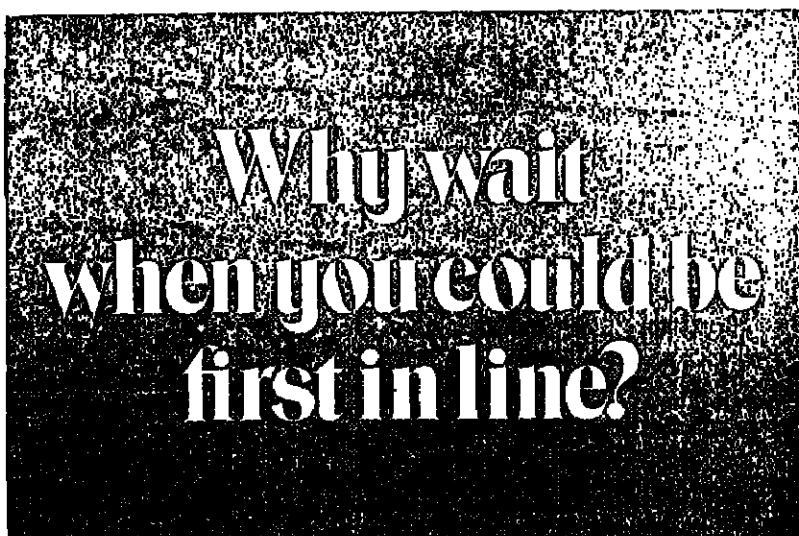
A less "geometrical" conception of reason than Plato's may well have democratic overtones. But great educational stress on "respect for persons as possible sources of points of view which may be right" should perhaps be questioned. Should strings be attached when "respect for persons" is taught? There is no evidence that the Good Samaritan expected a fruitful discussion with the traveller whom he had rescued.

But local authorities, the author argues, should now be deprived of their police function. His evidence is from *The Police Review*: "The new authorities are showing signs of wanting to encroach on police autonomy. Their power to appoint chief constables is less acceptable by the police." But this statement derives from the issue of October, 1972—eighteen months before the new authorities came into existence.

One more example of the inadequacy of this chapter: police strengths, Mr Lewis says, are greater than ever, but wrongly distributed. A national force could get the balance right. "Put crudely, London has at least 5,000 too few officers, and between that and the other constabularies probably have 8,000-10,000 too few. This means that there are 15,000 too many policemen in other forces. Chief Constables deny it." The denial of this startling conclusion, the reference disclosure, comes not from Chief Constables collectively, but from Sir Douglas Osmond, of Hampshire, in a letter to *The Times*. Hampshire, as it happens, has a population which actually exceeds that of two of the five metropolitan counties to which Mr Lewis would presumably send more police—and Sir Douglas was replying to a complaint by Sir Robert Mark of under-manning in London.

There is indeed a case for nationalizing the police, but Mr Lewis offers no sound evidence to show that the troubles of society which he describes so well are likely to be alleviated by yet another change in police organization. The need for this kind of book is evident, but to be really successful it would demand a commitment of time that is likely to be beyond the resources of a journalist. However, Mr Lewis' book is a sincere, well-intentioned study by a man who cares deeply about the way our society is going and who contains some good points for the good of local authorities.

There are three main sources on which a study of the police may be founded: first, current newspapers and journals, supplemented by talks with policemen; second, official publications such as the annual reports of the Chief Inspector of Constabulary and the Metropolitan Commissioner; together with the annual reports of Chief Constables; and third, the material that a serious researcher would glean from the Association of Chief Police Officers, the "Association of



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Please write for an application form to Eileen Durrance, Employment Services, The Boots Company Ltd., Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3AA.

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Applications are invited from those having similar experience to that detailed, preferably in an industrial environment, and who are qualified to ALA or equivalent.

If you require further details and/or an application form, please contact:-

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Applications are available from John Pluse, Staffing and Development Officer, Central Library, Prince's Way, Bradford BD1 1HN. Bradford 35081, Ext. 34.

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## UNIVERSITY OF LONDON Central Library Services

Applications are invited for the post of

## Senior Administrative Officer and Secretary of the Library Resources Coordinating Committee

which becomes vacant on 1 October, 1977 following the appointment of the present incumbent, Mr. Bernard Naylor, as University Librarian in the University of Southampton.

The person appointed will be required to continue the implementation of policies to coordinate and rationalize the library resources and services of the University, to administer the Committee's business and certain central library services, and to develop and oversee computerized and other systems to serve the libraries of the University.

Applicants should possess good academic and professional qualifications and have had considerable experience of work in an academic library.

Salary on Grade III of the National Consortium scales for senior library staff, viz £6,443-£7,951 plus London allowance of £450. USR/FSSSU.

Further particulars are available on request to Miss Crosby 01-636 8000 ext. 15, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU, to whom applications (no forms), including a curriculum vitae and the names and addresses of three referees, must reach not later than 10 June, 1977.

## City of Salford CULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Applications are invited from qualified librarians for the post of Senior Assistant Librarian (Lending) based at Eccles.

Post Reference 1041/77LS.

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Further details may be obtained from Musikhøgskolen, Nordal Brunst 8, Oslo 1 (telephone Oslo 20 70 18).

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Further information about the College and the appointment, and a form of application, may be obtained from:

The Secretary  
Stranmillis College  
Belfast BT9 5DY

Applications should be received not later than Friday, June 10th, 1977

## LIBRARIANS

UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG SUB-LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited for a post of sub-librarian in charge of readers services in the University Libraries. In addition to possessing a university degree and a recognised professional qualification in librarianship, candidates must have had five years' experience in an academic library, including supervision of junior staff, and at least two years in readers services. A knowledge of Chinese and experience of automated circulation systems would be additional advantages.

Annual salary (supernumerary) is HK\$66,350 x 3,750-44,060 x 3,750-44,060. Starting salary will depend on qualifications and experience.

Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), 100, Cannon Row, London WC1R 4EU, or the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Closing date for applications is 31st July 1977.

## HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY DEPUTY LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons with substantial experience in academic libraries for the post of Deputy Librarian. The salary will be in accordance with the University of Edinburgh scale for senior library staff £20,443 x £21,217.

Applications, which should include curriculum vitae and three references, should be sent not later than 6th June, 1977, to the Director of Studies, Heriot-Watt University, Leith, Edinburgh, to whom they should be sent.

Telephone or write immediately, enclosing addressed envelope, for application form quoting reference 77.0.2427.L. to: Appointments Department, BBC, London W1A 1AA. Tel: 01-580 4488, Ext. 4619.

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Applications are invited from qualified persons for the post of Assistant Librarian.

Initial salary up to £3,945 on scale £2,922 to £3,282 plus annual London allowance.

Further details and application forms should be obtained from the Secretary, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. Closing date: 6th June.

## DERBYSHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Applications by letter naming two referees to the Headmaster, Chillington School, Chillington, Derby, by 31st May, 1977.

## MANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC CREATIVE WRITING TOWNSHIP - 1977-78

Applications are invited from persons with appropriate qualifications and experience for appointment to the post of Creative Writing Township.

Salary approximately £4,500.

For further details write to The Director, Manchester Polytechnic, 100, Oxford Road, Manchester M6 9PU. Closing date for applications: 27th June 1977.

## LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH

Applications are invited for a post of Assistant Librarian in the Wandsworth Library.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Wandsworth Library, Wandsworth, London SW18 2JF.

## OLDHAM LIBRARIES ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Oldham Libraries, Art Galleries and Museums.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Oldham Libraries, Art Galleries and Museums, Oldham, Lancashire.

## LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK BRANCH LIBRARIAN S.O.1

Applications are invited for the post of Branch Librarian in the Southwark Library.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Southwark Library, Southwark, London.

## LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Islington Libraries.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Islington Libraries, Islington, London.

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Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Ealing Library Service.

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## BIRKBECK COLLEGE (University of London) LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

Applications are invited for the post of Library Assistant in the Birkbeck College.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU.

## WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM SERVICES

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Walsall Library and Museum Services.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Walsall Library and Museum Services, Walsall, West Midlands.

## NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Nottinghamshire County Council Education.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Nottinghamshire County Council Education, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire.

## MANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC CREATIVE WRITING TOWNSHIP - 1977-78

Applications are invited for the post of Creative Writing Township in the Manchester Polytechnic.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Manchester Polytechnic, 100, Oxford Road, Manchester M6 9PU.

Closing date for applications: 27th June 1977.

## INSTITUTE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON MEDICAL LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited for the post of Medical Librarian in the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of London.

## NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES DIVISION ACQUISITIONS LIBRARIAN

Applications are invited for the post of Acquisitions Librarian in the Norfolk County Council Library Services Division.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Norfolk County Council Library Services Division, Norwich, Norfolk.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH COLLEGE (University of London) LIBRARY ASSISTANT

Applications are invited for the post of Library Assistant in the Queen Elizabeth College.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Queen Elizabeth College, University of London.

## SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES (University of London) THE LIBRARY

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

## UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA AND SWAZILAND (University of Botswana) LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

Applications are invited for the post of Library Assistant in the University of Botswana and Swaziland.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, University of Botswana and Swaziland, Gaborone, Botswana.

## WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM SERVICES

Applications are invited for the post of Assistant Librarian in the Walsall Library and Museum Services.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Walsall Library and Museum Services, Walsall, West Midlands.

## MANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC CREATIVE WRITING TOWNSHIP - 1977-78

Applications are invited for the post of Creative Writing Township in the Manchester Polytechnic.

Salary: £3,357-£3,717 plus £312 p.a. supplement

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Librarian, Manchester Polytechnic, 100, Oxford Road, Manchester M6 9PU.

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